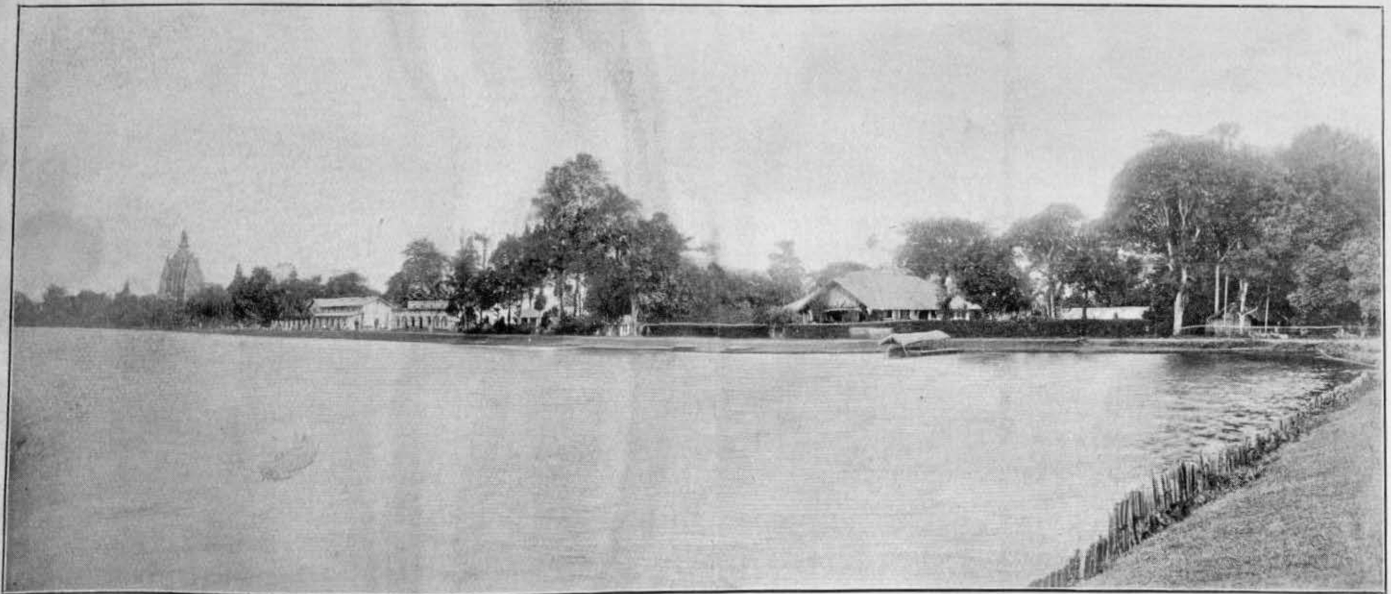


SIBSAGAR TANK.

ASSAM DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

VOLUME VII

Sibsagar.

BY

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PREFACE.

The Gazetteer of Sibsagar is nothing more than a general description of the district as a whole, and does not, as Gazetteers generally do, include a directory. There are, however, hardly any places in the district which are worthy of the name of town, and the little villages in which the people live do not call for a separate and detailed description. Places which are centres of local trade or of some industry have been specified by name, but to attempt to describe each of these villages would merely have resulted in the most tedious iteration. It should be added that the Gazetteer was compiled at a time when Assam was still a separate Province, and that when the Province is mentioned it is to Assam and not to Eastern Bengal and Assam that reference is made. My acknowledgments are due to the Deputy Commissioner for his kindness in examining the work in proof.

SHILLONG: *October* 1905. — B. C. ALLEN.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

Area and boundaries—General aspects—Hills—The Majuli—River system—Geology—Climate—Rainfall—Storms and earthquakes—Fauna.

Area and boundaries. The district of Sibsagar lies between 25° 49′ and 27° 16′ N. and 93° 2′ and 95° 22′ E., and covers an area of 4,996 square miles. On the north it is bounded by the districts of Darrang and Lakhimpur, on the east by Lakhimpur and hills occupied by tribes of independent Nagas, on the south by these hills and by the Naga Hills district, and on the west by the district of Nowgong.

Sibsagar falls into three natural divisions. The most populous and important portion is a wide and healthy plain lying between the Naga Hills and the Brahmaputra. North of that river is the Majuli, a great island no less than 485 square miles in area, which is separated from Lakhimpur by the Kherkutia Suti, at one time the main channel of the Brahmaputra, and the Subansiri. On the east, a considerable portion of the Mikir Hills and the upper valley of the Dhansiri have recently been incorporated within the boundaries of the district.

The marshes near the Brahmaputra. Throughout the whole of its course through Sibsagar, the Brahmaputra is bounded on the south by a belt of flooded land varying from three or four to as much as seven or eight miles in width. The country in this part is covered with high reed jungle, interspersed with

swamps or *bils* and magnificent stretches of rich fodder grass. There are few Assamese villages in this tract, and there is little cultivation except of summer rice, followed by pulse or mustard. Such inhabitants as there are, are Miris, whose houses are built on piles which raise them well above the level of the floods, or Nepalese graziers, whose buffaloes wander at will over the marshes and sandy *churs*. West of Bokaghat this strip of inundated country is seven or eight miles in breadth, and affords a splendid shelter for every kind of game. There are patches of tree forest in which wild elephants and mithun can shelter from the noonday heat, and stretches of high reeds impenetrable to any but the largest animals. Here and there in this sea of grass are little muddy pools in which the great rhinoceros loves to wallow, surrounded by reeds and grasses from fifteen to twenty feet in height. There are *bils*, or shallow meres, lying in the bottom of basins carpeted with luscious fodder grass, and enclosed by a wall of jungle. Here the wild pig come and burrow for their food, and the wild buffalo wallow in the water or lie beneath the shade of the gigantic reeds. Near the tree jungle there is higher ground, where the grasses cannot grow so rank and the deer can make their home.

The Sibsagar plain.

South of this flooded tract and east of the Dhansiri there is a wide plain, on which there is hardly any jungle to be seen. On the lower land the staple crop is transplanted rice, while the higher levels have been planted out with tea. The landscape, as a rule, is one of rural plenty. On every side stretch fields of waving rice,

and on every side the view is bounded by groves of feathery bamboos, and slender areca palms, in which the houses of the cultivators lie concealed. The tea gardens themselves have little to appeal to the lover of the picturesque. The rows of bushes are pruned down to one uniform level, and the monotony of this expanse of green is only relieved by the cooly lines, the factory, and the planter's bungalow. But they have, as a rule, been opened out on forest land, and the noble trees, with which the cultivated portion is frequently shut in, afford a pleasant contrast to the trim neatness of the handiwork of man.

Further south there is a belt of forest along the foot of the hills, but the area under timber is gradually diminishing, and fields of rice and tea gardens are appearing in its place. West of the Disai, the appearance of the plain is diversified by the protrusion of the sub-soil, and rice is often grown in curious depressions, called *hoolas*, which are three or four feet below the level of the higher land. The ground between these *hoolas* is used for grazing, or for the village site, and is often planted out with sugarcane.

The Dhansiri the natural boundary of Upper Assam.

The Dhansiri is no longer the administrative boundary of anything more important than a mauza, but, as a matter of fact, it is the natural boundary of Upper Assam. East of that river is a broad fertile plain stretching right through Sibsagar and Lakhimpur to the Noa Dihing. The whole of this plain is very homogeneous in its features. It is healthy, populous, and well cultivated, a country of prosperity and progress.

West of the Dhansiri it is Central Assam, a country of hill, forest, and marsh, inhabited by primitive tribes of Bodo origin, or by Assamese from the lower part of the valley. This country has only felt to a very modified degree the quickening effects of the great tea industry, and, during the last twenty years, the population has been more than decimated by *kala-azar*, that terrible scourge from which Upper Assam has fortunately been free. The part of Sibsagar that lies west of the Dhansiri differs as much from the part east of that river as Nowgong does from Lakhimpur, or the Jaintia Hills from the Jaintia Parganas.

The Mikir Hills. The upper valley of the Dhansiri and of the Doiang is covered with dense tree forest which is almost entirely destitute of population. A wonderful view of this forest can be obtained from one of the outer ranges of the Naga Hills. North, east, and west, as far as the eye can reach, there is nothing but a pathless wilderness of trees. In the far distance on the north the blue ranges of the Mikir Hills can be discerned some twenty-five miles away, but on the east and west there is forest *et præterea nihil*. The Mikir Hills consist of a mass of sharply serrated ridges, whose steeply sloping sides are green with creeper smothered trees and the bamboo jungle that springs up on the sites of fallowing *jhums*. The outer ranges are not more than 1,500 feet in height, but further back there are hills whose summits are 4,000 feet and more above the level of the sea. Dotted about amongst these forests are to be found the villages of the Mikirs, villages that sometimes consist of but

one or two huge houses, each of which accommodates a family of truly patriarchal proportions. Of all the tribes upon the north-east frontier, the Mikirs are probably the most amenable to law and order, and it is seldom that a European attempts to penetrate into their jungly fastnesses.

The Majuli.

North of the Brahmaputra, again, the country is very different. Nearly all of the Majuli lies too low for the cultivation of transplanted rice, and the staple crops are summer rice and mustard. Much of the country is still under high reed jungle, much under fine tree forest, which is rendered beautiful by festoons and loops of creeping cane. It is a country of luxuriant vegetation, of light sandy soil covered with fresh *dub* grass, of deep pools surrounded by umbrageous trees, of village paths and tracks bordered and carpeted with ferns. There is only one road in the island, which crosses it about the centre, and the inhabitants seem quite cut off from the more strenuous and eager life in the neighbourhood of Jorhat.

Hills.

Outside the Mikir Hills the whole of the district is a level plain. Two small hillocks call for special mention, but only on account of the associations with which they are connected, and not from any intrinsic importance of their own. The Charaideo hill in the Dhopabar mauza was once the burial place of the Ahom kings, and the ruins of their tombs are still to be seen, though they were rifled of their treasures by the Muhammadan invaders in the seventeenth century. The Neghereting

hill is a small eminence near the Brahmaputra on which stands a temple sacred to Mahadeo.

River system. The whole of the drainage of the district ultimately finds its way into the Brahmaputra. Even at this distance from its mouth, the Brahmaputra is an enormous river. In the cold weather the main channel shrinks to more moderate dimensions, and is surrounded on either side by sandy flats or beds of reeds and grasses. In the rains, when the river is full, it spreads over an enormous extent of country, and from one main bank to the other is a journey of several hours in a canoe or country boat. It is seldom possible to proceed direct, as the various channels of the river enclose numerous large islands. These islands are formed from the silt and sand that impart to the Brahmaputra water its turbid colour, and are formed or washed away, as the main stream slowly oscillates from side to side of the broad strath through which it makes its way.

The tributaries of the Brahmaputra the Dihing and Disang. During its passage through the district, the Brahmaputra receives many tributaries from the south. On the extreme east is the Dihing, which, for the last few miles of its course, forms the boundary between Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. This river never actually enters the Sibsagar district, and an account of it will be found in the Gazetteer of Lakhimpur. Next to the Dihing is the Disang, which rises in the hills occupied by independent Nagas east of Sibsagar town. It flows a north-easterly course till it reaches British territory, and then curves back and runs westward right along the north of Abhaipur and Silakuti mauzas. When parallel to and about eight miles from Sibsagar town, it takes a bend towards the north,

and finally empties itself into the Brahmaputra after a total course of 136 miles. Its principal tributaries are, on the right bank the Diroi and Dimau, and on the left bank the Taokak and Safrai. The Disang flows in a deep channel and does not change its course, but in the rains it often overtops its banks. The steps which have recently been taken to protect the country in the neighbourhood are described in Chapter IV.

The Dikho. West of the Disang is the Dikho, which rises right up in the Naga Hills, where it forms the boundary between British and independent territory. It enters the district south of Nazira, flows past that place and Sibsagar town, and falls into the Brahmaputra after a course of 120 miles, more than half of which, however, lies in the hills. Its principal tributary in Sibsagar is the Darika, which flows a little to the north of Sibsagar town and falls into the Dikho near its mouth. Both of these rivers overtop their banks when in flood, and steps have accordingly been taken to protect the country in the immediate vicinity.

The Jhanzi, Disai, and Kakadanga. The boundary between Sibsagar and Jorhat is formed by *the Jhanzi*, which is 71 miles in length, and, like the other rivers, rises in the Naga Hills. Then comes the Disai (81 miles in length), which flows past Mariani and Jorhat, and in the lower part of its course is called the Bhogdai. This name is said to have been bestowed on it in memory of a feast given by the Ahom Raja to the men he had employed in straightening the river's course. The Kakadanga, which is little more than 40 miles in length, forms the boundary between the subdivisions of Jorhat and Golaghat. These rivers closely resemble one

another in several particulars. They all flow through deep channels and do not change their courses. The bottom is muddy, there is no foreshore, and, unlike the Brahmaputra and its tributaries from the north, there is no alluvial or diluvial action going on. The current as a rule is very slack, but, like all streams rising in the hills, they are liable to sudden freshets, though the Kakadanga is said to be the only one of the three which ever overflows, to the detriment of the villages in the vicinity.

The Dhansiri.

The Dhansiri is the largest river in the district after the Brahmaputra, and, like the others, rises in the Naga Hills. On debouching on the plains it flows a northerly and easterly course between the Naga and the Mikir Hills down a valley which is for the most part covered with dense forest. It passes the town of Golaghat, then makes a bend towards the west, and falls into the Brahmaputra opposite the western end of the Majuli. Its total length is 177 miles.

General tendency of rivers to flow westwards.

West of the Dhansiri the only river of importance is the Diphlu, which for a considerable portion of its course flows parallel with the Brahmaputra. This is a phenomenon which is exhibited in a greater or less degree by almost all the rivers in the district, as the tendency of the drainage is to follow the levels of the country, which naturally fall towards the west. Conspicuous instances of this are to be found in the Tuni and the Gela *bil*. The Tuni is situated in the Majuli, the Gela *bil* in the north of Golaghat; and both of them are merely channels of the Brahmaputra which take off from that river and rejoin it

again at a point lower down in its course.

Bils and marshes. The greater part of Sibsagar lies too high for the formation of lakes, *bils*, or marshes, and the only ones of any size are situated in the Majuli and the flooded country south of the Brahmaputra. Even here, there are no sheets of water of any considerable size, and, as a rule, the *bils* take the form of deep ponds, very long in proportion to their breadth, which are simply the remains of rivers that have changed their beds.

Geology. The plain is of alluvial origin and consists of a mixture of clay and sand in varying proportions, ranging from pure sand near the Brahmaputra to clay so stiff as to be quite unfit for cultivation. The higher land is apparently the remains of an earlier deposit of alluvium. Mr. Maclaren, in a paper on the Geology of Upper Assam, published in Vol. XXXI, Pt. 4 of the Records of the Geological Survey of India, suggests that the level of the valley is still sinking. Were it stationary, the broad belt of low land lying on either side of the Brahmaputra and many other rivers would soon be raised to flood level by the deposit of the enormous volume of solid matter brought down by these rivers, and would be carried far beyond it by the luxuriant vegetable growth of the country. In the same paper there is an interesting speculation on the formation of the Assam Valley (p. 198—204), but it is too long for reproduction here and cannot easily be summarised.

Coal. The only mineral of economic importance in Sibsagar is coal, and even that lies beyond the boundaries

of the district. As, however, much of it is situated in independent Naga territory, and as it is from Sibsagar that it will be worked, if it is worked at all, it will be convenient to describe these measures in the Sibsagar Gazetteer. They are situated in the outer ranges of the Naga Hills a little to the south of Nazira, and were visited by Mr. Mallet in 1874-75, whose report will be found in Vol. XII, Pt. 2 of the Memoirs of the Geological Survey of India. To the north-east, the coal measures stretch from the Dikho along the watershed between the Safrai and its tributary the Tiru, while south-west they have been traced to a point due north of Tamlu. According to Mr. Mallet, the data, though insufficient to form an estimate of the total quantity of available coal, show that a large quantity must certainly be there. He roughly calculates that in the Safrai section of the field from the north of the Chota Taokak to the south-south-east of Tirugaon there are about ten million tons of marketable coal, while west of the Dikho there are about seven million tons. There are also two small fields in the valleys of the Jhanzi and the Disai, which have not been very thoroughly explored.

For some years past the Assam Company have worked out small quantities of coal for use in their own factories, but not for sale. The question of constructing a tramway from the Santak siding up the valley of the Dikho and embarking on coal mining on an extensive scale is now under consideration. There are hot springs near the Dimapur road about ten miles from Golaghat, and lime is found in the vicinity.

Sibsagar, like the rest of Upper Assam, enjoys a cold winter and a cool and pleasant spring. In October, the rains begin to stop and the nights grow cool, but the real cold weather does not set in till the following month. How sharp is the change can be judged from the fact that the difference between the average minimum for October and November is no less than 11.° December, January, and February are cold and pleasant and in January the average maximum is only 70.° The lowness of the temperature is partly due to the fogs which, in the cold weather, frequently hang over the valley till the day is well advanced. Though unpleasant in themselves, they help to keep the country cool by diminishing the period during which it is exposed to the action of the sun. In March, the thermometer begins to rise, but the copious rains of early spring prevent the development of a hot weather, and it is not till June that the climate really grows unpleasant. The air is then surcharged with moisture, and the damp heat is trying alike to natives and to Europeans. The average maximum and minimum temperature for each month will be found in Table I. **Climate.**

In the east of the district the average rainfall varies from 90 to 95 inches in the year, but between the Dhansiri and the Jhanzi it is only between 80 and 82 inches. The Dhansiri valley itself is, for Assam, unusually dry, and the average rainfall at Dimapur is less than 60 inches. November to February are the four dry months in the year; but the special feature in the rainfall of Sibsagar, as of other districts in Assam, is the heavy rain **Rainfall.**

in April and May, at a time when precipitation in Northern India is at a minimum. Between April and September there is heavy rain, which ranges from 8 to 16 inches per mensem, and March and October each have an average fall of 4 or 5 inches. The rainfall recorded in each month at six different stations in the district will be found in Table II.

Storms and earthquakes. Sibsagar is never visited by destructive hurricanes, but during the rains a spell of hot dry weather is often closed by a thunder shower, which immediately cools the air, and is on that account extremely welcome. Hail storms occasionally do damage, especially on tea gardens, but fortunately are very local in their action.

Sibsagar, like the rest of Assam, is liable to earthquakes, and the chronicler of Mir Jumla's expedition describes the alarm produced amongst the invaders by one of these unlooked-for visitations. The great earthquake of 1897 was distinctly felt and did considerable damage, though it was as nothing in comparison with the widespread havoc wrought elsewhere. The treasury at Golaghat was injured, and two brick pillars in the engine house at the Jorhat railway station collapsed in ruins. Some damage was done on tea gardens, and here and there short stretches of road were shaken down to the level of the rice fields. Even in Sibsagar the earthquake was a distinctly singular experience, and, had it not been for the extraordinary violence of the shock between Gauhati and Sylhet, it would have taken rank as quite a serious seismical disturbance.

In the more settled portions of the district wild **Fauna.** animals are becoming very scarce, though they are fairly common in the Mikir Hills and the swamp that lies between them and the Brahmaputra. The list includes elephants, rhinoceros, bison (*bos gaurus*), buffalo, tigers, leopards, bears, wild pig and different kinds of deer, of which the principal varieties are sambar (*cervus unicolor*), barasingha (*cervus duvauceli*), hog deer (*cervus porcinus*), and barking deer (*cervulus muntjac*).

Elephants may not be shot and are usually hunted on the system known as *mela shikar*. Mahouts mounted on staunch and well-trained elephants pursue the herd, which generally takes to flight. The chase is of a most arduous and exciting character. The great animals go crashing through the thickest jungle and over rough and treacherous ground at a surprising pace, and the hunter is liable to be torn by the beautiful but thorny cane brake, or, were he not very agile, to be swept from his seat by the boughs of an overhanging tree. After a time the younger animals begin to flag and lag behind, and it is then that the opportunity of the pursuer comes. Two hunters single out a likely beast, drive their elephants one on either side, and deftly throw a noose over its neck. The two ends of the noose are firmly fastened to the *kunkis*, as the hunting elephants are called; and, as they close in on eitheir side, the captured animal is unable to escape, or to do much injury to his captors, who are generally considerably larger than their victim. The wild elephant is then brought back to camp, where it s tied up for a time and gradually tamed. In the days

of native rule the capture of wild elephants was a prerogative of the crown. The Hathighar which connects the Ladoigarh with the hills is said to have been constructed for this purpose, and tradition has it that on one occasion a thousand animals were taken in this gigantic knedda. The system of *mela shikar* was introduced in the time of Purandar Singh, who levied a royalty of Rs. 10 on every animal captured. Prior to this private individuals were not allowed to hunt at all.*

Elephant hunting was last carried on on an extensive scale in 1903-04, when 82 animals were captured. The district is divided into eight mahals and the right to hunt elephants in each mahal is put up to action; a royalty of Rs.100 is also paid on each beast caught. Rhinoceros live in the swamps near Kajiranga and are now becoming scarce. They breed slowly, and as the horn is worth more than its weight in silver, and the flesh is prized as food, they present a tempting mark to the native hunter. Herds of wild buffalo are found in the same locality, and wild bulls occasionally serve the tame cows that are kept by the Nepalese on the Brahmaputra *churs*. Bison are generally found in the Mikir Hills, and, in the cold weather, sometimes descend to the jungles at their feet.

Steps have recently been taken to form the wide expanse of jungle near Kajiranga, which covers a total area of about 90 square miles, into a game reserve.† Wild animals cause little loss of human life, but, in 1904, are said to have accounted for nearly one thousand head

* Vide Deputy Commissioner's letter No. 70, dated August 23rd, 1852.

† About half of this reserve is situated in the Nowgong district.

of cattle. The number of human beings killed in that year by different animals was as follows :—elephant, 4 ; tigers, 1 ; wild buffaloes, 1, snakes, 4 ; total, 10. Rewards were at the same time paid for the destruction of 12 tigers, 15 leopards, and 13 bears.

Small game include wild geese and duck, snipe, jungle fowl, black and marsh partridge, pheasants and hares.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

Early history—The Kachari kingdom—The Chutiyas—Their downfall—The advent of the Ahoms—Steady growth of their power—Koch and Muhammadan invasions—Rudra Singh in 1700 A. D. rules the whole of Assam Proper—The Moamaria insurrection—Invasion of Assam by the Burmese—Occupation of Assam by the British—The manners and customs of the Ahoms—The Paik system—The fighting qualities of the Ahoms—Arbitrary form of Government—Social life—Attitude towards Hinduism—The position of women—Condition of the country in 1824—Restoration of Upper Assam to Purandar Singh and the resumption of his territories in 1838—Plots in 1857—Peaceful progress under British rule—Affairs on the Naga frontier—Archælogical remains—Chronological table.

Early history.

It is possible that Sibsagar formed part of the old kingdom of Kamarupa, and that Bhagadatta enlisted levies in Upper Assam before he sailed with his troops down the Brahmaputra, only to fall on the field of Kurukshettra. It is possible that the district was at one time governed by Aryan rulers from the west; but, if this is so, there are practically no records of the period of their occupation; and it is with Bodos and Shans that the history of Sibsagar is concerned, and not with the legendary princes of Hindu mythology. In comparison with Kamrup, which can point to a masonry causeway constructed, so the story goes and so the people genuinely believe, by a king who lived and died before the great

war of the Mahabharata, the history of Sibsagar is but a thing of yesterday. But what it lacks in antiquity it makes up in accuracy and detail, for here we are dealing with a people endowed with the historical sense, a people who compiled the annals of their nobles and their kings, and whose records have most fortunately come down to us.

The Kachari kingdom. Origin of tribe.

When the curtain lifts, and it does not lift, as in the rest of the Assam Valley, only to fall again before it rises for the drama of modern history, we find a large part of the district under the dominion of the Kachari king of Dimapur. These Kacharis belong to the great Bodo tribe, which is found not only in the valley of the Brahmaputra but in the Garo Hills and in Hill Tippera far away to the south. They are thought to be a section of the Indo-Chinese race, whose original headquarters are said to have been located in the inaccessible hills and valleys which conceal the sources of the Yang-tse-kiang and Ho-ang-ho, and they seem to have gradually spread in successive waves of immigration over the greater part of what is now known as the Province of Assam. At the present day, a prayer is still in use in North Cachar which refers to a huge pipul tree growing near the confluence of the Dilao (Brahmaputra) and the Sagi. There the Kacharis were born and increased greatly in numbers, and thence they travelled till they reached Nilachal, the hill in Kamrup on which the temple of Kamakhya stands. From Gauhati they migrated to Halali, and finally settled in Dimapur. This account of the migration of the Kacharis is to some extent confirmed by Hindu tradition,

which describes the line of Narak as being overthrown by foreign invaders, and as being afterwards restored in the person of one of his descendants, Brahmapala.

Difference between Kacharis of Darrang and of Dimapur.

At the time when they moved eastward from Gauhati the tribe seems to have split up into different sections, and there is nothing to suggest that the Kacharis living on the north bank of the Brahmaputra continued to be subject to the king of Dimapur. Originally, no doubt Rabhas, Meches, Garos, Làlungs, Bodo or north bank Kacharis, and Dimasa or the Kacharis of Cachar were all members of the same stock; but they have gradually grown away from one another, and Bodo and Dimasa are now as dissimilar as French and Spanish. Even in the same district the two sections of the tribe are said to be distinct. The Kacharis in the north of Nowgong are Bodos, and are closely connected with the Kacharis of Darrang; but they have nothing to do with the Hojais, who are Dimasa and live near the North Cachar and Jaintia Hills. At the time of the Ahom invasion in 1228 A. D. the Kacharis seem to have been a powerful tribe occupying the valleys of the Kapili and the Dhansiri: The ruins of their capital at Dimapur, which are described at length at the conclusion of this chapter, show that they had advanced a considerable distance on the path of civilization. At the present day this place is buried in dense jungle, and the tract of country between the Mikir Hills and the Assam Range is a howling wilderness almost destitute of inhabitants; but the remains of tanks and temples found in the Kapili valley

suggest that at one time there must have been fields and houses where there is now nothing but waving reeds and whispering grass.

War between Kachari kings of Dimapur an Ahoms in 15th and 16th centuries.

The history of the Kacharis in Sibsagar is but vague and fragmentary, as, unlike the Ahoms, they have left no annals of their rule. They are said to have engaged in war with Jangal Balahu, a Raja whose fort was situated near Raha in Nowgong; but even the date at which this prince was reigning is uncertain, and we do not reach the solid base of fact till we find them in collision with the Ahoms. The first war broke out in 1490 A. D, when the Ahom king Suhangpha was defeated and driven across the Dikho. The scene of the battle is in itself significant, as it shows that the Kacharis could fight, and fight successfully, at a considerable distance from their capital, and that they could make their influence felt not only in the Mikir Hills and the forests of the Dhansiri but in the fertile plains of Jorhat and Golaghat. But it was not for long that they were to enjoy the pleasant sense of victory. War soon broke out again, and in 1536 A. D. Suhunmung, who was generally known as the Dihingia Raja, advanced up the valley of the Dhansiri, killed the Kachari Raja, Detsung, and sacked his capital, Dimapur. The headquarters of the kingdom were then removed to Maibang in the North Cachar Hills, and from there again to Khaspur in the plains to the south of the Barail, but the subsequent history of the tribe forms part of the history of Cachar and has little or no connection with Sibsagar.

The Chutiyas. It now remains to consider what is known of the history of the Chutiyas, the other section of the Bodo tribe who, at the time of the advent of the Ahoms, shared with the Kacharis the sovereignty of the Sibsagar district. The early history of a semi-savage tribe is naturally veiled in some obscurity, but there seems little doubt that the Chutiyas were members of the great Bodo race, and entered the plains from the north-east. Colonel Dalton, quoting from an ancient chronicle, which is confirmed by local tradition, states that they were originally settled in the hills near the Subansiri river. The tribe lived in large independent villages like the Abors and Miris of the present day. In course of time one Bibar seems to have attained a certain measure of supremacy over the neighbouring villages, and the process begun by the father was carried on still further by the son. He extended his influence over the wild tribes, assumed the title of Lord of the Hills, and, at the head of his followers, descended into the valley of the Brahmaputra. He there defeated a king called Bhadra Sen and founded a capital called Ratnapur, which is said to have been situated in the Majuli or in the North Lakhimpur subdivision. Gaur was at that time still under the rule of a Hindu dynasty, so the eruption of the Chutiyas must have taken place prior to its conquest by the Muhammadans in 1204 A. D. The Chutiya leader assumed the name of Ratnadwaj Pal, contracted an alliance with a neighbouring Raja called Naipal, and generally consolidated his power. He excavated tanks, built temples, and constructed a line of forts along the frontier. He

then asked the king of Kamateswar* to bestow a daughter in marriage upon his son, and on that prince rejecting the proposed alliance with scorn, constructed a road to his territories protected by forts erected at intervals along the line of march, and so alarmed the Kamateswar Raja that his daughter was handed over without delay. Ratnadwaj visited the king of Gaur, and left a son to be educated at his court. The boy died and his body was despatched to his father, who received it when he was building a new city, called in memory of this event Sadiya (the place where the corpse was given).

Downfall of Chutiyas.

Ratnadwaj was succeeded by five kings, each of whom bore the name of Pal. The last of the series, Karmadwaj, had one daughter for whose hand there were so many suitors that the king, with a Jephthah like fatuity, decided to submit the selection of his son-in-law to the arbitrament of fate. A flying squirrel was seen hovering over Sadiya, and the hand of the princess was promised to the man who could bring it down with an arrow. A poor young Chutiya was successful, and much to her disgust, the proud princess was united to her lowly spouse. The old king then resigned in favour of his son-in-law, who assumed the name of Nitipal.† Naturally enough he was utterly unfitted for the high position to which he had so

* Presumably Kamatapur in Kuch Bihar, which is said to have been founded by Niladwaj, whose grandson Nilambar was conquered by the Muhammadans at the end of the fifteenth century. This date would be too late for the invasion of the Chutiyas, and the expedition against Kamatapur is probably quite mythical.

† According to another version the king left an infant son, for whom Nitipal acted as regent.

suddenly and undeservedly been raised, and the kingdom was soon reduced to a state of anarchy and confusion. The Ahoms seized this opportunity to push home their attacks, and the power of the Chutiyas was broken once for all. Little reliance can, however, be placed upon these legends. The story of the poor Chutiya boy who marries the princess is probably a poetical description of the descent of the tribe into the valley, and of the subjugation of the Hindu dynasty reigning in Lakhimpur. The date of the downfall of the Chutiya Kingdom, according to the Chutiya Buranji, is, moreover, 150 years later than that assigned to this event in the Ahom chronicles, which state that it took place in 1523 A. D.*

The Ahom account of the Chutiyas. The Ahom historians say that when they entered Assam in 1228 A. D., the Chutiyas were established at Sadiya, and were masters of the country as far west as the Disang river. Hostilities broke out between the two powers towards the middle of the fourteenth century. In 1376 A. D. the Chutiyas declared that they were ready to make peace, invited the Ahom king to a regatta on the Safrai river, and put him to death as soon as they had got him into their power. The two tribes continued to live in a state of intermittent conflict, but at the beginning of the sixteenth century the struggle began to assume an acute form. The Chutiyas at first met with a considerable measure of success. They pitched their camp at Dikhomukh, raided the territory of the Ahoms, and were,

* Mr. H. J. Kellner in a manuscript note in the Nowgong office says that it must have occurred before 1503 A. D. The general who conquered the Chutiyas was Phuchunmung Bor-gohain, who was killed in a great battle between the Ahoms and Kacharis at Kaliabar in 1503.

at any rate, not worsted in the engagements that ensued. Another account represents the Chutiyas as extremely stupid. They mistook scarecrows sent down the river on rafts for the enemy, and, when preparing a night attack by water, they were so drunk that they forgot to unmoor their boats. On waking the next morning tney were so puzzled to find themselves still in the same place that they at once retreated without attempting to engage the enemy.

In 1523, the Chutiya king began to treat for peace, but declined to accept the Ahom terms, which involved the surrender of ancestral heirlooms in the shape of a gold umbrella and bracelets. The attack was accordingly resumed, and the Chutiya king retreated with his army to the hill Chantan or Chandangiri. The Ahoms in their pursuit experienced the difficulties which at the present day confront our own troops in their trans-frontier expeditions. The soldiers at first retreated, but they were rallied by their officers; and, in the engagements that ensued, the Chutiya king and his son were killed. Their heads were conveyed to the Ahom prince Suhunmung, more generally known as the Dihingia Raja, and placed by him at the foot of the stairs leading to the house of god at Charaideo. The administration of Sadiya was then entrusted to an Ahom noble, and the leading Chutiya families deported to places lower down the valley. But the tribe again rebelled, it was only with difficulty that this fresh revolt was stamped out, and as late as 1572 A. D. an expedition was sent against an insubordinate Chutiya chief.

The Ahoms enter Assam in 1228 A. D.

Having disposed of the Chutiyas and Kacharis, it is time to turn to the history of the Ahoms, the fierce and warlike tribe of Shans, who, starting from the smallest of beginnings, gradually subjugated the whole of the valley of the Brahmaputra as far as the Manas.*

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, there was a dispute with regard to the succession to the kingdom of Mungmau or Pong in the upper portion of the Irawadi Valley. The unsuccessful claimant to the throne left the capital with his friends and followers, and, after wandering about for some years, crossed the Patkai, and, in 1228 A. D., settled down at the foot of the Naga Hills, in the country which has since been formed into the districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur.

When Sukapha, the first Ahom king, arrived in 1228 A. D. he found the Chutiyas ruling in the north with an outpost at Safrai, and the Kacharis in the south with an outpost at Kendaguri, the river Dillih forming the boundary between the two. In the narrow strip of territory near the hills there were a few families of Borahis and Morans, evidently of Bodo origin, whom the Ahom chief absorbed into his clan in the rough and ready manner of that day. The men were invited to a feast and killed, the women taken to wife, and the little colony settled down undisturbed in this no man's land to gradually increase in strength and numbers.

Steady growth of Ahom power.

The struggles between the Ahoms and the Chutiyas and Kacharis have already been described, but, apart

* The description of the manners and customs of the Ahoms, and much of the history has been taken from old Ahom buranjis, translations of which will be found in the office of the Superintendent of Ethnography.

from this gradual movement of expansion towards the east and west, the early history of the Ahom dynasty contains few incidents likely to attract the attention of the historian. A list of the successive Ahom kings will be found in the chronological table appended to this summary, but many of them are names and nothing more, and of their reigns little or nothing of interest is known. On the whole it seems to have been a cruel and treacherous time; and in this respect the Ahoms were no better than their neighbours. It is true that the Ahom king was murdered by his hosts at a regatta to which he had been invited by the Chutiyas; but a similar ruse was employed by the Ahoms against the Tipumias. When they suspected this people of an inclination to rebel, they asked them to a feast, and then put them all to death. Though they sinned against the laws of hospitality, they were evidently unconscious of the heinous character of the offence, and the skulls of their victims were hung up on the Tipam stone to commemorate this grisly banquet.* Arbitrary and tyrannical conduct by the Raja was checked or, rather, ended by the principal ministers of state; and more than one king who failed to give satisfaction to his duly constituted advisers, met with a sudden end from the knife or spear of the hired bravo.

The Dihingia Raja, 1497–1539.

The first Ahom king to step forth from the position of a petty local prince into that of a ruler who had dealings with the outside world was Suhunmung, or the Dihingia

* Amongst the tribes on the North-East Frontier there is no reverence for the salt. In Manipur, in 1891, some Kukis asked some Nagas with whom they had had a dispute to a reconciliation banquet and then murdered them.

Raja, who came to the throne at the end of the fifteenth century. His victories over the Chutiyas and Kacharis have already been described, but he was no less successful in his dealings with the Musalmans and Koches.

The former sent two expeditions up the Brahmaputra Valley, but neither met with much success, and the leader of the second, a Pathan named Turbuk, was killed with most of his followers on the banks of the Bhareli in 1532. A.D. The survivors were made prisoners, and are said to have been the ancestors of the Morias, a degraded caste of Muhammadans who earn their living as braziers in Assam at the present day. It was in this war that the Ahoms are said to have first employed firearms. The Bhareli seems at this time to have been the western boundary of the Ahom kingdom, north of the Brahmaputra. It is recorded that, in 1529 A.D., the king took up his quarters at Bishnath, and ordered his generals to plunder the territory lying west of the Bhareli. Suhunmung, like so many of the Ahom kings, met his end at the hands of an assassin, and was succeeded by Sukhenmung, who is said to have founded a capital at Gargaon near the modern Nazira.

Sukampha, 1552–1611, conquered by Nar Narayan. His successor helps Koches against Muhammadans.

His successor Sukampha enjoyed the throne for nearly sixty years, but he was unable to withstand the victorious armies of the Koch king, Nar Narayan, who occupied Gargaon and extorted tribute from the Ahom Raja. The triumph of the Koches was, however, but shortlived, and about 1614 A.D. Bali Narayan, the grandson of Silarai, Nar Narayan's brother, was compelled to apply to the next Ahom king, Suchengpha or Pratap Singh, for help

against the Muhammadans. The war dragged on in Lower Assam with varying success, but in 1637 the Nawab of Dacca sent up an overwhelming force, which carried all before it. The Ahoms were driven out of Kamrup, and a treaty was made under which the Barnadi was accepted as the frontier between Muhammadan and Ahom territory.

Sutumla or Jaiyadwaj Singh, 1654–1663.

Suchengpha enjoyed a long and prosperous reign, but his two successors were unfitted for the greatness they were born to, and were soon deposed. In 1654, Sutumla or Jaiyadwaj Singh came to the throne. Taking advantage of the confusion that ensued when Shah Jahan was deposed by his rebellious sons, he drove the Musalmans out of Kamrup and Goalpara, and for a short time the Ahoms were in possession of the whole of the valley of the Brahmaputra down to the point at which the river turns south to enter the fertile plains of Bengal. Mir Jumla, the Nawab of Dacca, was not, however, the man to brook such aggressions on the territory of the Mughal Empire, and in 1662 he started with a large force for the conquest of Assam.*

Mir Jumla's invasion in 1662.

No resistance was offered to the Muhammadans during the initial stages of their march, and they occupied the forts at Jogighopa, Srighat, and Pandu near Gauhati, Gauhati itself, and Kajali on the western frontier of Nowgong, without striking a blow. At Simlagarh, which seems to have been in the neighbourhood of Kaliabar, there was a strongly fortified post, upon which even the

* An interesting account by Professor Blochmann of the invasion of Mir Jumla and of the preceding wars between the Muhammadans and Koches will be found in J. A. S. B., Vol. XLI., Pt. I, No. 1, 1872.

big guns of the Muhammadans made but little impression, but the garrison displayed extraordinary cowardice, and the place was captured without difficulty. The Ahoms then attempted to destroy the huge flotilla of boats which accompanied the invading host, but fortune still declined to smile upon them, and they met with no better success than when engaging the enemy by land. Half of their fleet, which is said to have consisted of seven or eight hundred vessels, each armed with a gun, was lost, and the rest were put to flight. If the Musalman historians are to be believed, the river must at that time have been covered with native craft, as the registrar at Gauhati reported that no less than 32,000 boats had visited that town, more than one-half of which it is said belonged to the Assamese.

Occupation of Gargaon.

No further opposition was offered to the advancing host, and on March 17th, 1662, the Nawab entered Gargaon. The Raja and his army had evacuated the town and retreated to Namrup in the south-east. The general placed his headquarters at Mathurapur, a place about seven miles south-east of Gargaon, and established thanas in different parts of the Sibsagar district. But when the rains began to break these isolated posts were exposed to attacks from the Assamese, and had to be drawn in, and the position of the Imperialists was such as to cause dissatisfaction to the men and the gravest anxiety to their generals. They were unable to move about the country, and any stragglers who ventured outside the camp were promptly shot. They were exposed to perpetual night attacks, there was heavy mortality

from fever, and, apart from rice, there was very little food. Salt was sold in the camp for Rs.30 a seer, butter for Rs.14 a seer, and opium fetched as much as a gold mohur per tola. The health of the troops at Mathurapur became so bad that it was found necessary to move them to Gargaon. It proved to be impossible to retire even this short distance in good order, and the Muhammadans were compelled to abandon their sick and to leave many of their guns sticking in the mud. At the conclusion of the rains the Musalmans began once more to take the offensive, but Mir Jumla's health had become so bad that he was unable to pursue the campaign with any degree of vigour, and a peace was patched up in January 1663. According to the Muhammadan historians, the Ahom Raja agreed to pay a heavy indemnity, and the country north of the Brahmaputra and west of the Bhareli, with Beltala, Damuria, and the Naga Hills on the south bank of the Brahmaputra, were ceded to the Mughal Emperor. It is, however, doubtful whether these terms were ever carried out. This, at any rate, is certain that only a few years later the Ahoms were once more in possession of Kamrup, and the outposts of the Muhammadans were located not on the Bhareli but at Rangamati in the Goalpara district.

Assam as described by the historian of Mir Jumla's invasion.

The description of Assam in the latter half of the seventeenth century as given by the Muhammadan invaders is full of interest. The road from Kaliabar to Gargaon is said to have passed through well cultivated land, and on every side there were houses, gardens, and orchards. This description hardly holds good of

the road from Kaliabar to Bokaghat at the present day, but the remains of roads and plinths north of Kajiranga show that what is now a howling jungle inhabited by buffaloes and rhinoceros, must in former days have been the site of prosperous villages.

It is also said that the north bank was better cultivated than the south, a statement that still holds good as far as Goalpara and Kamrup, with which the writer was no doubt most intimately acquainted, are concerned. Rich and poor alike built their houses of wood, bamboo, and thatch, and the people generally seem to have led a simple vigorous life.

Description of Gargaon. The following description of Gargaon is of sufficient interest to warrant reproduction:—

"The town has four gates built of stone and mortar, the distance of each of which from the palace of the Raja is three *kos*. A high and wide *Al*, very strong, has been made for the traffic; and round about the town, instead of fortifications, there are circular bushes of bamboos, about two *kos* in diameter. But the town is not like other towns, the huts of the inhabitants being within the bamboo bushes near the *Al*. Each man has his garden or field before his house, so that one side of the field touches the *Al*, and the other the house. Near the Raja's palace, on both sides of the Dikho river, are large houses. The bazar road is narrow, and is only occupied by *pan*-sellers. Eatables are not sold as in our markets; but each man keeps in his house stores for a year, and no one either sells or buys. The town looks large, being a cluster of several villages."

Products of country. Rice was the staple food, but salt was scarce and dear. Salt of an inferior quality was obtained from the salt wells in the coal measures, but the bulk of the people used the *khar pani* that is so commonly distilled from the ashes of the plantain at the present day. Mangoes were plentiful but full of worms, and sugarcane of three

varieties, black, white, and red, did well. Elephants were evidently a source of wealth, but asses, camels, and horses were rare.

The Raja's palace is described in the most glowing terms, and one cannot help suspecting that the writer was inclined to magnify the wonders he had seen.— **Ra a's palace.**

"The ornaments and curiosities, with which the whole woodwork of the house is filled, defy all description : nowhere in the whole inhabited world will you find a house equal to it in strength, ornamentation, and pictures. The sides of this palace are embellished by extraordinary wooden trellice work. Inside there are large brass mirrors highly polished, and if the sun shines on one of them, the eyes of the by-standers are perfectly dazzled. Twelve thousand workmen are said to have erected the building in the course of one year. At one end of the hall, rings are fastened on four pillars opposite to each other, each pillar having nine rings. When the Raja takes his seat in the hall, they put a daïs in the middle of these four pillars, and nine canopies of various stuffs are fastened above it to the rings. The Raja then sits on the daïs below the canopies."

Jaiyadwaj Singh did not long survive his expulsion from his capital, and, in 1663, he was succeeded by Chakradwaj Singh. During the reign of this prince the Ahoms re-occupied Gauhati, and there was a serious famine, an occurrence which is most unusual in Assam. According to the old chronicler there was no water in the fields, no field was tilled, and no water could be got except by drawing it from deep wells with ropes. On the death of Chakradwaj, a short period intervened in which the nobles proved too strong for the crown, and between 1670 and 1681 no less then seven princes were placed upon the throne, only to come to a bloody and untimely end. The Muhammadans took advantage of these disturbances to regain possession **Gad har Singh restores order, after anarchy between 1670 and 1681.**

of Gauhati, but they were driven out by Gadadhar Singh, who came to the throne in 1681, and restored to it the prestige which it had formerly enjoyed Not content with consolidating his power in the plains he despatched expeditions against the Mishmis and the Nagas. By this rigorous policy he reduced to order the hill tribes, who have, whenever the central government was weak, been a source of great annoyance to the dwellers in the valley.

Rudra Singh, 1695–1714.

The zenith of the Ahom power was reached in the reign of Rudra Singh. He founded a new capital at Rangpur, which was built for him by one Ghonsyam, a Bengali, who also constructed a bridge across the Namdang. He despatched two large armies against the Rajas of Cachar and Jaintiapur, one of which marched through the North Cachar and the other through the Jaintia Hills, and brought both of those princes captive to Assam. The Miris and Daflas were enlisted as soldiers in the royal army, and, at this time, the Ahoms seem to have dominated not only the whole of the valley of the Brahmaputra but the outer hills as well. Rudra Singh died at Gauhati in 1714, and the Rudreswar temple was erected there by his son in memory of that sad event.

Sib Singh 1714–1744.

His son Sib Singh was a weak prince much under the influence of his wives, whose name has come down to posterity as the excavator of the great tank near which the present station of Sibsagar (Sib's tank) stands. The Daflas seem to have given trouble, and in 1717 the Daflagarh was constructed to keep these mischiev-

ous tribes in check ; but, generally speaking, this long reign was singularly devoid of interest. It is, however, worthy of note that even as long ago as the first half of the seventeenth century, four Europeans are said to have visited Rangpur.

The reign of the next prince, Pramatta Singh, was short and uneventful, and during the incumbency of his successor, Rajeswar Singh, the signs of the decay of the Ahom power became all too clear. The Raja of Manipur was driven from his home and applied to the Ahom king for aid. Orders were issued for the despatch of an expedition, but the nobles to whom the command was entrusted excused themselves on various grounds, and declined the proferred honour. The army lost its way when endeavouring to cross the Patkai, a large number of men perished, and, though ultimately the Manipur Raja succeeded in regaining his dominions, it does not appear that the assistance of the Ahoms materially contributed towards his success.

Pramatta Singh, 1744–1751.

Rajeswar Singh, 1751–1769.

The alliance between the Ahoms and the Manipuris was, however, cemented by the bestowal of a Manipuri princess, whom Rajeswar Singh elevated to the rank of principal queen.

In 1759, the peaceful tribe of Mikirs are said to have raided on the plains, but little difficulty was experienced in putting down this rising. The Rajas of Cachar and Jaintiapur also made demonstrations on the southern frontier, but, on troops being despatched to Raha, they came to the conclusion that discretion was the better part of valour. Another expedition was despatched

against the Daflas, and the Raja of Khyriem formally tendered his submission and promised to pay a yearly tribute of iron. In 1757, Jorhat was honoured by a visit from the Raja, and he had a temporary residence erected there; but this town did not become the capital of the Ahom kings till they had been driven from Rangpur by the Moamaria rebels.

Lakshmi Singh, 1769—1780. The Moamaria insurrection.

The reign of his successor, Lakshmi Singh, was signalized by the outbreak of the Moamaria insurrection. The causes of this insurrection are not quite clear. According to the chroniclers, a certain Hathidharia Chungi with one Nahor Kachari came to offer their annual tribute of elephants to the king. The elephant which they tendered to the Borbarua was a lean and sorry animal, and, as an expression of his disapproval, he cut off their hair and noses, flogged them, and drove them away. Boiling with indignation at this outrage, Nahor proceeded to the house of a Hari woman, whose daughter he espoused, and from whom he received a set of metal plates, covered with mystical incantations to confound the enemy. He then applied to the Moamaria gosain for help, which was readily afforded him, and the standard of revolt was raised. This is the account given by the Ahom chroniclers, and it differs to some extent from the story as told by the Moamaria gosain at the present day. According to this authority, the leaders of the rebellion were two Moamarias named Nahor Khora and Ragho Neogay, who, after they had been punished for failing to deliver the elephants required, went for assistance to their gosain.

The gosain himself declined to listen to their proposals, but they succeeded in winning over his son Gagin Bardekha, who gave them a weapon consecrated with the magic plates of the Kalpataru. The Kalpataru was a sacred book which Anirudha is said to have obtained from Sankar Deb, though the Ahom chroniclers contemptuously assert that it was the property of a sweeper woman.

Success and subsequent defeat of Moamarias.

From the very first the rebels carried all before them. The royal armies were defeated under circumstances which suggest that men and officers alike were guilty of gross incompetence and cowardice; and Lakshmi Singh was driven from his capital and captured. The insurgents then proceeded to appoint Ramakanta, the son of Nahor Khora, to be their Raja. Marauding parties harried the country on every side, and the misery of the common people was extreme. A report at last gained ground that orders had been issued for the execution of all the former officers of state, and this incited the adherents of the king to make one final effort. The signal for the attack is said to have been given by one of the wives of Lakshmi Singh. Ragho, who was one of the most influential men amongst the Moamarias, had forcibly taken her to wife, and as he was bending down at the *bihu* to offer his largess to a dancing boy, she cut him down with a sword. On the death of their leader the rebel forces were surprised and scattered, and a pitiless vengeance taken that spared neither age nor sex.* The house of the Moamaria mahunt was

* The Moamarias say that 790,000 members of their sect were killed, which is no doubt an oriental exaggeration.

surrounded, and almost the whole of his family was killed before his eyes, while all the officers appointed by the Moamarias were seized and beaten to death. The wives of the rebel prince were treated with savage cruelty. One of them was flogged to death, while two others had their ears and noses cut off and their eyes put out.

Gaurinath Singh, 1780-1795.

In 1780, Lakshmi Singh died, and was succeeded by his son Gaurinath, in whose reign the Moamaria insurrection broke out anew, and with increased violence.

Moamarias again victorious.

At first, the king's troops met with some measure of success, and orders were issued outlawing the rebels and authorising any person to kill any Moamaria he might meet, regardless of time, place, sex, or age. Such orders seem to have been only too well adapted to the temper of the people, and, according to the Ahom chronicler, "the villagers thereupon massacred the Moamarias with their wives and children without mercy." The rebels in their turn were not slow to make reprisals; they plundered the country on every side, and "the burning villages appeared like a wall of fire." The ordinary operations of agriculture were suspended, no harvests could be raised, and famine killed those whom the sword had spared. "The price of a katha of rice rose to one gold mohur, and men starved in crowds under the trees, forsaking their wives and children." The highest Hindus castes are said to have eaten the flesh of cows, and dogs and jackals were devoured by the common people.

In 1786, the rebels under Bharat Singh inflicted a decisive defeat upon the royal troops, and took Rangpur, the capital, by storm. The king fled to Gauhati, and in his

terror even left his wives behind him. His generals remained behind in Upper Assam and carried on the contest with varying success. Troops were despatched to their assistance from Manipur, but most of them were ambushed and cut up, and the survivors had no heart to carry on the struggle. The desolation of the country is thus described by the Ahom chronicler:—"The Mataks harried the temples and the idols of the gods, and put to death all the sons and daughters of our people. For a great length of time our countrymen had no home, some took shelter in Bengal, some in Burma, some in the Dafla Hills, and others in the fort of the Bura Gohain, who was fighting with the Mataks for years and months together." Bharat Singh ruled at Rangpur for upwards of six years, and coins are extant which bear his name; but in 1792 a small British force was sent to the assistance of the Ahom king under the command of Captain Welsh. Gauhati, which had been captured by a mob of Doms under a Bairagi, was re-taken. Krishna Narayan, the rebellious Raja of Mangaldai, was subdued, and in March 1794 Rangpur was re-occupied after a decisive victory over the insurgents. Captain Welsh was then recalled, but the Ahom king was able to keep his enemies in check by the help of sepoys trained on the English system.

Kamaleswar Singh, 1795–1809.

A few months after the departure of Captain Welsh, Gaurinath died, and was succeeded by Kamaleswar Singh. The country was still in a state of great disorder. The Daflas, not content with harrying the villages on the north bank, crossed the Brahmaputra and attacked the royal troops near Silghat, but were repulsed

with considerable loss. Even Europeans were not safe, and a Mr. Raush,* a merchant of Goalpara, who had extended his business operations to Darrang, was robbed and murdered by "naked Bengalis." These freebooters then occupied North Gauhati, but, when they attempted to make good their position on the south bank, they were defeated with heavy loss by the royal troops near Pandughat. The Daflas again harried the Darrang district, and even enlisted Bengali sepoys in their service, but were ultimately conquered and dispersed. Victories were also obtained over the Moamarias and the Khamtis at the eastern end of the valley.

Final collapse of the Ahom kingdom.

In 1809, Kamaleswar Singh was succeeded by his brother Chandra Kanta Singh. The Bor Phukan or viceroy of Gauhati incurred the suspicion of the Bura Gohain or prime minister and fled to Calcutta and thence to Burma. At the beginning of 1816, a Burmese army crossed the Patkai and reinstated the Bor Phukan, but shortly after their withdrawal Chandra Kanta was deposed, and Purandar Singh appointed in his stead. The banished monarch appealed to the Burmese, who, in 1818, returned with a large force and replaced him on the throne.

They soon, however, made it clear that they intended to retain their hold upon Assam, and in 1820 Chandra Kanta fled to Goalpara, and from British territory began a series of abortive attempts to recover his

* This Mr. Raush was the first European to interfere in the affairs of Assam. He sent 700 burkandazes to Gaurinath's assistance, but they wore cut up to a man. A mass of masonry, the size of a small cottage, covers the remains of Mr. Raush's infant children at Goalpara.

lost kingdom. The Burmese were guilty of gross atrocities during their occupation of the country, the villages were plundered and burnt, and the people were compelled to seek shelter in the jungle. Women who fell into their hands were violated with every circumstance of brutality, and the misery of the unfortunate Assamese was extreme. Fortunately for them, causes of quarrel had by this time arisen between the British and the Burmese. In 1824, war was declared by the British Government, and a force was sent up the valley of the Brahmaputra, which occupied Rangpur in January 1825, and compelled the Burmese to retire to their own territories, while in the following year, by the treaty of Yandaboo, Assam was ceded to the East India Company.

Ahom Administration. The paik system.

The above is but a brief account of the rise and fall of the Ahoms It now remains to consider what is known of their social institutions, and the conditions under which those subject to them passed their lives.

The most striking feature in the economy of the Ahom state, and one which (to judge from their conduct since they came under our rule) must have been extremely repugnant to the people, was the system of enforced compulsory labour. The lower orders were divided up into groups of three or four called *gots*, each individual being styled a *powa paik*. Over every twenty *gots* was placed an officer called *bara*, over every five *baras* a *saikia*, and over every ten *saikias* a *hazarika*. In theory one *paik* from each *got* was always employed on duty with the state, and while so engaged, was

supported by the other members. The Raja and his ministers had thus at their disposal a vast army of labourers to whom they paid no wages, and for whose maintenance they did not even have to make provision. It was this system which enabled the Ahom Rajas to construct the enormous tanks and great embankments, which remain to excite the envy of a generation, which has been compelled to import from other parts of India almost all the labour required for the development of the Province and its industries. Many of the works constructed were of undoubted utility, but many, on the other hand, were chiefly intended for the glorification of their designers. Few objects are more worthy of the attention of an enlightened government than the supply of wholesome drinking water to the people. But the huge reservoirs, constructed by the Ahom kings, were out of all proportion to the population which could by any possibility have made use of them, while the close proximity in which these enormous tanks are placed is ample evidence that practical utility was not the object of their construction. On the other hand, embankments which were thrown up along the sides of some of the rivers near the capital, protected land which has become unculturable since they have fallen into disrepair. The duty of providing the various articles required for the use of the king and the nobility was assigned to different groups, which were gradually beginning to assume the form of functional castes. The rapidity with which these groups abandoned their special occupations, as soon as the pressure of necessity was removed, is a clear indica-

tion of the reluctance with which they must have undertaken the duties entrusted to them.*

War.

But though the common people seem to have been compelled to supply an unnecessary amount of labour in times of peace, it was when war was declared that their sufferings were most pronounced. Certain clans of *paiks* were called out, and called out, it would seem, in numbers that were in excesss of the actual requirements of the case; an error which entails the most disastrous consequences when the campaign is carried on in a country where supplies are scarce and communications difficult.

According to the Ahom chronicler, nearly 40,000 troops were despatched during the reign of Rajeswar Singh to reinstate the Manipuri Raja on the *gaddi* Their guides, however, failed them, they lost their way in the Naga Hills, and about two-thirds of the soldiers perished, the mortality being chiefly due to famine and disease. The military dispositions even of Rudra Singh, one of their greatest princes, suggest a want of due deliberation in design and a feebleness and lack of method in execution. In his expeditions against the Kachari and Jaintia Rajas the Ahoms lost 3,243 persons, and the practical results obtained seem to have been insignificant. The Jaintia Raja is himself ready to accept the Ahom king as his suzerain, but cannot impose his

* The system of enforced labour was no doubt unpopular, but it had much to recommend it. It taxed the people in the one commodity of which they had enough and to spare, *i. e.*, labour. It also developed them on the industrial side, and the material comfort of the Assamese would possibly have been greater at the present day if they had not all of them been allowed to devote themselves exclusively to agriculture.

will upon the independent hillmen, who owe him but a nominal allegiance, and who decline to surrender their freedom at the bidding of their king. The Kachari prince sends tribute, but only "a string of pearls, a dugdagi (locket) and a horse ;" assuredly a very small return on the quantity of human life and treasure expended. It must at the same time be admitted that the loot obtained on this occasion was not inconsiderable. It included three large cannon, 2,373 large and small guns, 12,000 pieces of silver, 143 gold embroidered coats, 63 elephants and 11 Turkey horses, besides other things ; and, more valuable perhaps than all, over 2,000 human beings. At the conclusion of this dangerous and troublesome expedition, each *paik* received a gratuity of four annas, *batta* which would hardly satisfy the sepoy of to-day. The descriptions of the campaigns against the Moamarias, given by the Ahom chroniclers, clearly show that the generals were often guilty of incompetence and cowardice, while the rank and file do not seem to have fully realized the dangers that beset a defeated army. Conditions such as these must of necessity have been disastrous to the private soldier.

Muhammadans describe Ahoms as brave soldiers.

The Muhammadan historians of the invasion of Mir Jumla give, however, a more favourable account of the Ahom military dispositions.* Their resources seem to have been considerable, and, in the course of the expedition, the Muhammadans captured 675 guns, one of which threw a ball three "mans" in weight, besides a large

* An interesting account of this invasion will be found in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Volume XLI, Part, 1, pages 49—100.

number of matchlocks and other field pieces. No less than 1,000 ships were taken, many of which could accommodate three or four score sailors ; and in the naval engagement which took place above Silghat in March 1662 A. D. the Assamese are said to have brought seven or eight hundred ships into action. The Ahoms are described as strongly built, quarrelsome, bloodthirsty, and courageous, but at the same time merciless, mean, and treacherous. They were more than equal to the Muhammadans in a foot encounter, but were much afraid of cavalry. This *corps d'élite* did not, however, exceed some 20,000 men, and the ordinary villagers, who were pressed into the service, were ready to fling away their arms and take to flight at the slightest provocation.

Uncertainty and arbitrary character of Government.

Another factor, which cannot but have re-acted unfavourably upon the common people, was the uncertainty of tenure, under which both the ministers and king held office. A perusal of the Ahom chronicles leaves the reader with the impression that the ministers were continually being deprived of their portfolios, and not unfrequently of life itself. Hardly less precarious was the position of the king, and, in the short space of 33 years, between 1648 and 1681, no less than two monarchs were deposed, and seven came to a violent end. Good government, as we understand the term, must have been impossible under such conditions ; and we may be sure that the people suffered from this constant change of rulers. Buchanan Hamilton, writing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, states that the administration of justice under Ahom rule was fairly liberal. Important trials were

conducted in open court, the opinion of assessors was consulted, the evidence was recorded, and capital punishment was only inflicted under a written warrant from the king. It is true, no doubt, that few persons possessed the power of imposing the death sentence. But they were allowed to inflict punishments which the victim could hardly be expected to survive, and his position was not unlike that of the heretic delivered by the inquisition to the civil arm, with the request that "blood may not be shed."

Instances of this.

Abundant evidence is available in the Ahom chronicles to show the arbitrary way in which the royal authority was exercised. The following instances are quoted from the reign of Pratap Singh, 1611—1649 A. D. A Kataki, or envoy charged with diplomatic relations with foreign powers, asked the Muhammadan commander on his frontier to supply him with two jars. His conduct was reported to the king, who immediately ordered him to be put to death. Another Kataki reported that he had heard from a down-country man that a Muhammadan force was advancing up the valley The king enquired of the Kataki responsible for watching the movements of the enemy whether this information was correct. This man declared that he was unable to obtain any confirmation of the rumour, whereupon the first Kataki was executed for presuming to meddle in matters with which he had no concern; a proceeding which seems to have been hardly calculated to ensure the supply of timely and accurate information. Three merchants then endeavoured to establish friendly relations between the Nawab of Dacca and the Ahom king. The latter prince took umbrage at

such unwarrantable interference in affairs of state, and ordered the merchants to be put to death. It subsequently appeared that the facts had not been correctly represented, and the Bor Phukan and two other men responsible were promptly killed. A few years later the king transported a large number of persons from the north to the south bank of the Brahmaputra, warning them that any one who attempted to revisit his former home would suffer the penalty of death with all his family "even to the child in the womb." Five hundred men attempted to return, as they wished, the chronicler informs us, to rear a brood of silkworms. The king had them arrested, and 300 were put to death, the remainder escaping in the darkness of the night.

Savage punishments: an official blinded for not dismounting before his official superior.

The following incident that occurred in the reign of Lakshimi Singh (1769—1780) is typical of the uncertainties of the times. One Ramnath Bhorali Borua, an officer of state, had the presumption to appear mounted in the presence of his official superior, the Borborua. A complaint was promptly laid before the king, who directed that both Ramnath and his brother should be deprived of sight. The injured man was not, however, destitute of friends, and came with his complaint to the Kalita Phukan, who had his private reasons for desiring the downfall of the Borborua. The Phukan went to the king, poisoned his mind against his minister with the suggestion that a conspiracy was on foot, a suggestion which in those days must always have seemed plausible enough, and, in a short time, the heads of the haughty Borborua, his two uncles, and his brother were rolling

in the dust. It is needless to multiply instances of the savage violence of the times, but the different forms of punishment in vogue call for some remark. Where life was spared, the ears, nose, and hair were cut off, the eyes put out, or the knee pans torn from the legs, the last named penalty generally proving fatal. Persons sentenced to death were hung, impaled, hewn in pieces, crushed between two wooden cylinders like sugarcane in a mill, sawn asunder, burnt alive, fried in oil, or, if the element of indignity was desired, shorn of their hands and feet and placed in holes, which were then utilized as latrines.

In the seventeenth century it was no uncommon thing to compel conspirators to eat their own flesh, and more than one case is quoted in which the father was forced to eat the liver of his son, a meal that was usually his last in this world. Punishment too was not restricted to the actual offender, but his wretched wife was liable to be handed over to the embraces of a Hari. Methods such as these could hardly fail to have a terrifying effect on much more hardened criminals than the Assamese.

Social life amongst the Ahoms.

The native chroniclers are naturally most concerned with the wars and religious festivals, which bulked so largely in the eyes of the historians of the day, and with the rise and fall of successive families of ministers. It is only incidentally that light is thrown on the social conditions of the people. The kings seem to have indulged in frequent tours about their territories, the itinerary usually followed being Rangpur, Sonarinagar, Tengabari, Dergaon, Jaliarang, Bornagar, Bishnath, and Kaliabar.

They were fond of fishing and shooting, and fully appreciated the excitement to be obtained from the hunting of wild elephants. On the occasion of coronations and royal weddings, a week was generally devoted to the festivities, which seem, however, to have consisted for the most part of prolonged feasts, accompanied by much unmelodious music. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, acrobats and jugglers were imported from Bengal, who amused their royal patrons with tricks which are still shown to the tourist on the P. & O. Kamaleswar Singh visited in state the two principal *sattras* of Auniati and Dakhinpat, and was entertained with all his retinue by the gosains. The chronicler quaintly tells us that the lunch at Dakhinpat gave greater satisfaction than the one at Auniati; but does not say whether this was due to the superior skill of the Dakhinpatia cook, or to the greater beauty of the *sattra* precincts.

Attitude of Ahoms towards Hinduism. Savage persecution of Vaishnavism.

The first Hindus to influence the Ahom kings were saktists, and Pratap Singh (1611—1649) persecuted the Vaishnavites, one of whose leaders had converted his son to Hinduism. The disciples of the gosains were seized, human ordure was placed on their foreheads, and they were degraded to the sweeper caste. To be found in the possession of religious books meant death, not only to the actual owner, but to every member of his family. Even Pratap Singh's spiritual pastors were not spared, and he denounced the new religion which, in spite of the adherence of the Raja, had not been able to save from death his own beloved son. He then assembled 700 Brahmans,

ostensibly to perform a festival, and, as a punishment for their incompetency, degraded them to the status of *paiks*. These persecutions were continued by Gadadhar Singh, who in 1692 plundered the treasure houses of the Vaishnavite gosains, and cast the idols into the water. No respect was shown even to the sacred head of the Auniati *sattra*, and he was driven from his home to Tejikhat. He fared, however, better than the gosain of Dakhinpat, who had his eyes put out and his nose cut off, while many Hindu priests were put to death. A policy of extermination seems in fact to have been inaugurated, and, according to one chronicler, orders were issued for the destruction of every Hindu child regardless of sex and age. The king had large quantities of pork, beef, and fowls, cooked by men of the Dom caste, and compelled Kewats, Koches, Doms, and Haris to partake of this unholy food.

This policy of oppression was reversed during the reign of Rudra Singh, his son, who was publicly admitted as a disciple of the Auniati gosain; and, from this time forward, the influence of the priests seems to have increased.

The leadin gosains persecuted by Moamarias.

During the Moamaria insurrection the religious orders again fell upon evil times. The rebel king confined the persons of the four principal gosains, and extorted Rs. 8,000 each from Auniati and Dakhinpat, and Rs. 4,000 each from Garamur and Kamalabari. Religion was degraded by the promulgation of an order that any person could be initiated on payment of a betel-nut, and the common people availed themselves in crowds of this

indulgence. Subsequently in the reign of Gaurinath Singh, the Moamarias attacked the Garamur *sattra*, burned it to the ground, slew a large number of the disciples, and nearly killed the gosain himself. His successor Kamaleswar Singh (1795—1809) found himself unable to pay the sepoys, whose services were indispensable for the maintenance of some sort of order in the kingdom. Following the example of other monarchs, he called upon the church to supply the funds for the support of the temporal power. Contributions were levied on all the mahunts, and the demands of the soldiers were satisfied.

Laxity of Ahom Hinduism.

But, though converted to Hinduism, the Ahoms found the restrictions of their new religion irksome; and their gosains, with the tact which they display towards their converts of the present day, allowed their new disciples a considerable degree of latitude. Rudra Singh, though he had been publicly admitted to the church by the Auniati gosain, feasted his followers on buffaloes and pigs on the occasion of his father's funeral; while not only buffaloes but even cows found a place in the menu of his coronation banquet. At the time of the first Moamaria insurrection, the rebel chief made overtures to Lakshmi Singh, and offered him, apparently in good faith, a pig for supper. A present such as this, clearly shows that even towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Hinduism of the Ahom kings was one of the most liberal variants of that catholic creed. Before taking any decisive step, it was the practice to refer, not only to the Brahmans and Ganaks, but also to the old Ahom priests

the Deodhais and Bailongs. These venerable men were required to consult the omens, by studying the way in which a dying fowl crossed its legs ; a system of divination which is in vogue amongst many of the hill tribes of Assam to the present day. The restrictions of caste were evidently somewhat lax, as we hear that the Moamaria mahunt had an intrigue with a Hari woman ; while at the beginning of the 19th century the viceroy of Gauhati took a fisher girl for his mistress, a breach of the convenances for which, it should be added, he was deposed.

The position of women.

The influence of the Muhammadans in Assam Proper was so slight, that the low view they professed to take of the other sex had little or no effect upon the general population. The Ahoms, like their Burmese ancestors, held their womenfolk in honour, and even at the present day the purdah, and all that it implies, is almost unknown in the country inhabited by the Assamese. The Ahom princesses seem to have taken a prominent part on ceremonial occasions, and not unfrequently exercised considerable influence on affairs of state. In the middle of the 17th century, two of the queens almost usurped the reins of government, and, according to the Ahom chronicler, "their words were law." When called to account by the successor of their husband, they proudly stated that they had been of great service to the king at a time when he was ignorant of the way in which he should behave, whether when "eating, drinking, sitting, sleeping, or at council." Sib Singh (1714—1744) is said to have abdicated in favour of his

queens, hoping thereby to defeat a prophecy which declared that he would be deposed; and coins have been found bearing the names of four of these princesses. The mother of Lakshmi Singh dug a tank, and Gaurinath entrusted to his stepmother the control of the Khangia mel, and consulted with his mother about affairs of state. It was not, however, only the princesses of royal blood who concerned themselves with public matters. At the time of the Moamaria insurrection, one Luki Rani was sent against the rebels; and the victory over Turbuk in 1532 is partly ascribed to the courageous action of the widow of the Buragohain, who had been killed in a previous engagement by the Muhammadans. Desperate at the loss of her husband, she put on armour and rode into the ranks of the enemy to avenge his death. No mercy was shown her and she fell, pierced with spears; but her example emboldened the Ahoms, who at once advanced to the attack and defeated the Musalmans with great slaughter.

Condition of Province at time of cession to the British.

In estimating the effects of British rule, it is necessary to form a clear idea of the state of the Province at the time when it passed into our possession, and first it must be pointed out that the British did not conquer Assam in the sense in which that word is usually employed. The native system of government had completely broken down, the valley was in the hands of cruel and barbarous foreigners, and it was not as conquerors but as protectors and avengers that the English came. They were certainly not inspired by any lust for land. For some time after the expulsion of the Burmese,

the East India Company were doubtful whether they would retain their latest acquisition, and an attempt was made to administer the upper portion of the valley through a descendant of the Ahom kings.

The condition in which we found the country was lamentable in the extreme. For fully fifty years the Province had been given over to desolation and anarchy. Life, property, honour were no longer safe, and the people in their misery had even abandoned the cultivation of the soil, on which they depended for their very livelihood. Bands of pirates used to raid up the valleys of the Dhansiri and Kakadanga, and return with their boats laden with booty, leaving ruin, death, and desolation in their wake. The hill tribes were no longer kept in order, and the Daflas descended and harried the submontane tracts, and even extended their depredations to the south of the Brahmaputra. The treatment meted out to the unfortunate villagers, can be judged from the protest made by the hillmen to Rajeswar Singh, shortly before the collapse of the Ahom government, when they begged him "not to pull out the bones from the mouths of dogs." Buchanan Hamilton, writing in 1809 A. D., states that north of the Brahamputra "there is no form of justice. Each power sends a force which takes as much as possible from the cultivator."

Native testimony on this point.

The memories of this miserable time survived long after it had passed away. In 1853, an Assamese gentleman, Srijut Ananda Ram Dhekial Phukan, wrote as follows to Mr. Moffatt Mills: "Our countrymen hailed he day on which British supremacy was proclaimed in

the Province of Assam, and entertained sanguine expectations of peace and happiness from the rule of Britain. For several years antecedent to the annexation, the Province groaned under the oppression and lawless tyranny of the Burmese, whose barbarous and inhuman policy depopulated the country, and destroyed more than one half of the population, which had already been thinned by intestine commotions and repeated civil wars. We cannot but acknowledge, with feelings of gratitude, that the expectations which the Assamese had formed of the happy and beneficial results of the Government of England, have, in a great measure, been fulfilled; and the people of Assam have now acquired a degree of confidence in the safety of their lives and property which they never had the happiness of feeling for ages past."

Whatever errors have been committed by the British Government, and it is too much to hope that no mistakes of policy have been made during an administration of nearly eighty years, there can be no question that the introduction of a settled form of government has been of the greatest benefit to the immense mass of the people to whom it has been extended.

Purandar Singh's territory.

Reference has been already made to the hesitation with which the East India Company undertook the administration of Assam. In 1833, the experiment was tried of placing the portion of the valley lying between the Dhansiri and the Dihing south of the Brahmaputra, and between Bishnath and Sādiya on the north bank, under Raja Purandar Singh. The Raja was accorded the position of a protected prince, was entrusted with full

civil powers, and was required to pay an annual tribute of Rs. 50,000 to Government. It was thought that this arrangement would prove acceptable to the Assamese, but experience showed that this was not the case. In 1838, Captain Jenkins, Agent to the Governor-General on the North-East Frontier, travelled through the Raja's territories, and was met on every side by complaints and charges against his administration. North of the Brahmanputra the country was left unprotected, and the people were harried by the Daflas, who carried off their women and children and held them to ransom. Small guards of sepoys were occasionally sent to protect the frontier, but, as the villagers were expected to provide them with all that they required, their presence and absence alike were felt to be a grievance. The distasteful system of compulsory labour was still maintained, duties of as much as one anna in the rupee were levied on everything except rice sold in the markets, and the people who remained were required to pay the poll tax of others who had died or had migrated to the territory directly under our administration.

There can be little doubt that Purandar Singh's administration was unpopular with every section of the community, but it is difficult to resist the conclusion that it was never really given a fair chance. Major White estimated that the revenue of his territories amounted to about Rs. 80,000.* Of this no less than half a lakh was ear-

* Letter No. 80, dated 6th July 1838, from Captain Jenkins. A letter from Purandar Singh's son states that when his father accepted the Raj he had no idea what a large proportion Rs. 50,000 bore to the total revenues of the country. Colonel Cooper, he says, had made a settlement for Rs. 1,70,000, but neither he nor any of the British officers who succeeded him could collect more than Rs. 70,000 or Rs. 80,000.

marked as tribute, and the Raja was left with a nominal Rs. 30,000 per annum from which to defray the expenses of his court, to satisfy the demands of the priests, and to carry on the business of the administration. It is hardly matter for surprise that little was spent on public works, that the army was small and inefficient, and that it was impossible to remit taxation. The natural tendency of mankind to cavil at the government seems to have been overlooked, and too much importance was attached to every murmur of complaint. The Muhammadan settlers in the country professed that they had serious grievances, yet Captain Jenkins was himself constrained to admit that those who came to see him were far better dressed than he expected, and that, judging by externals, many of them were well off. There can, however, be little doubt that the resumption of this territory in 1838 was an act which met with hearty approval from the great majority of the persons affected.

Peaceful progress under British rule.

The history of the district since it came under British rule has been one of peaceful development. The great tea industry has had a wonderfully stimulating effect, and the progress of the people has not been retarded by the terrible outbreaks of malarial fever which decimated the population of Lower and Central Assam. The only other points that call for notice are the conduct of the local notables during the trying times of 1857, and the behaviour of the Naga tribes beyond our frontier.

Plots in 1857

At the time of the Mutiny the resumption of Sibsagar was a matter of comparatively recent date, and it was only natural that the family of the Raja and the upper

classes and hangers-on of the former court should think regretfully of the times of Purandar Singh. Mr. Moffatt Mills, in 1853, admitted that they had been ruined by the emancipation of their slaves, and that this measure had reduced many families of respectability to indigence; and it was not to be expected that such people would be enthusiastic supporters of the Company. The miseries of the Burmese invasion were not yet forgotten, and they had no desire for actual independence; but they had every reason to deplore the abolition of the privileges of their caste, which they hoped to be able to restore in a protected native state. Even in 1853, the young Raja, Kandarpeswar Singh, urged on Mr. Mills his right to hold Upper Assam as an independent tributary; and it was only natural that, when four years later the flame of revolt spread over Hindustan, the more daring of his adherents should have planned to seize by force what had been denied to their more peaceful supplications.

Moni Ram, Dewan, chief instigator of the plot.

The prime mover in the matter was Moni Ram, Dewan, who, in the time of Purandar Singh, was one of the most important persons in the district. On its resumption by the Company he lost his most valuable offices and emoluments, and resigned those that were left to him, to take service as Dewan of the Assam Company. He no longer found it an easy matter to support his household, which he informed Mr. Mills numbered no less than 185 persons, and he had every motive to induce him to promote the restoration of the old order, and sufficient hardihood and independence to attempt to give effect to his desires.

From Calcutta he wrote to the Saring Raja, Kandarpeswar Singh, informing him that Hindustan had been conquered by the sepoys, who were daily approaching nearer to the Presidency town, and advising him to take this opportunity of recovering the throne. Meetings were accordingly held at night at the Raja's house, and Duti Ram, the criminal sheristadar at Sibsagar, was approached, and lent his approval to the scheme. The subadar at Dibrugarh was also seduced from his allegiance, and promised to bring his men to support the Raja at Jorhat. A number of other influential men seem to have been gained over, and steps were taken to collect provisions for the soldiers.* The rising was to take place in the Durga Pujas, when, in the presence of Moni Ram Datta and other leading men amongst the Assamese, Kandarpeswar Singh was to be seated on the throne This proposal did not, however, meet with general approval. The raiyats, when they learned of it, became alarmed, concealed their property, and prepared for flight ; and some of the older men approached by the Raja not only declined to assist him in the furtherance of his plans but disclosed them to Harnath Parbottia Borua, the daroga of Jorhat.

Plot crushed by Deputy Commissioner.

The district officer, Captain Holroyd, seems to have been well informed of what was going on, and at the proper time the Raja was arrested and despatched to Alipur. At the conclusion of the enquiry he was released, but was required to live under surveillance in the neighbour-

* Letter dated 28th June 1858, from Capt. Holroyd to Secretary to Government of Bengal.

hood of Calcutta, and was not allowed to return to his native country. Moni Ram was arrested at Calcutta, and sent up to Assam, where he was duly tried, sentenced, and hanged ; and the story of his death is often sung in the villages even at the present day. The sepoys at Dibrugarh seem to have been much affected by the mutiny of Koer Singh, from whose territory many of them came, and, for a time at any rate, succeeded in influencing the Assamese soldiers in the corps. This feeling of uneasiness was not noticed till September, when Colonel Hannay made carefully conducted enquiries with regard to the temper of his men, distributed the Hindustanis over the smaller and remoter outposts, from which they had no means of communicating with one another, and gradually concentrated the loyal nucleus of Nepalese at Dibrugarh.

The hands of the authorities were further strengthened by the despatch of two naval brigades, each consisting of 100 Europeans, who reached Assam in September 1857 and January 1858, and there was no overt outbreak to disturb the public peace.

The Trans-Dikho Nagas. The hills east of the Dikho are inhabited by tribes of independent Nagas, but, even in the days of native rule, they were in political relations with the Ahom government. They have always derived considerable profit from their dealings with the plains, and they generally have sufficient sense to abstain from carrying their quarrels into British territory. In 1842, Captain Brodie, who was at that time in charge of the Sibsagar district, went for a tour amongst the Naga villages between the

Dikho and the Buri Dihing. He reported that in this tract there were the following ten clans :—

(1) The Namsangias with 8 villages; (2) the Borduarias with 8 villages; (3) the Paniduarias with 10 villages; (4) the Mutonias or Kulungs with 4 villages; (5) the Banferas with 4 villages; (6) the Jobokas with 4 villages; (7) the Changnois with 8 villages; (8) the Mooloongs with 5 villages; (9) the Jaktoongias with 8 villages; (10) the Tabloongias with 13 villages.

Captain Brodie persuaded the chiefs of these clans to abstain from outrages on British territory and to discourage inter-tribal feuds, and, so great are the advantages that they obtain from intercourse with the valley, that these sections of the Naga race have seldom been a source of serious trouble. In 1863, the outpost at Geleki was burnt down by a raiding party belonging, apparently, to some of the remoter Naga tribes. Government did not on this occasion close the duars to trade, but when in 1867 the post was again attacked, and several of the constables killed, the neighbouring tribes were promptly excluded from the plains. This measure resulted in the arrest of two of the principal offenders, who were found to be Zungia Abor Nagas, a clan whose villages were situated at a considerable distance from the valley.

The Dikho laid down as frontier of Naga Hills.

In 1884-85, the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills toured through the country lying on either side of the Dikho, and in the following year it was laid down that the hills west of that river should be under his management and not under the Deputy Commissioner of Sibsagar. The most important tribes with which the

latter officer is concerned are the Banferas and the Jobokas. The two clans have for many years been on bad terms with one another, but, so long as they respect the sanctity of our frontier, they are allowed to settle their disputes as best they can. The Sibsagar Nagas are generally fairly quiet, but from time to time they carry their feuds across the border or cause annoyance by their petty thefts. In 1891, they seem to have been unsettled by the Manipur disturbances. They became more insolent in their manner, the people living near the frontier were alarmed, and a detachment of 100 sepoys was stationed for nearly two months at Sibsagar. Small parties of men were sent to Sonari and Bihubar, and some military police were quartered at Geleki, and public confidence was thus restored.

Murders in 1892.

In the following year there was an epidemic of outrages upon the frontier. In April, a party of Banfera Nagas sallied out to kill the Raja of Lakrang, a small village which had formerly been subject to Banfera but which had been annexed by the Joboka Nagas. The Raja made his escape, but one of his followers was murdered in some jungle on the Balijan grant near the Inner Line.* The Banfera Raja was called upon to deliver up the culprit, and, as he only handed over a wretched individual who was innocent of the crime, he was fined Rs. 500 by the order of the Chief Commissioner. Barely half this fine was, however, realized and the balance was remitted. In November of that year two Nagas of Jak-

* A line laid down as the limits of the effective jurisdiction of the Assam administration, without prejudice to our claims to territory beyond it.

tung were killed near the Santak grant by Failung Nagas, who mistook them for men from Khongan, a village with which they were at feud. The murderers were sent in and sentenced by the Sessions Judge to transportation for life, but were pardoned by the Chief Commissioner on condition that the Failung and Jaktung villages composed their differences. In March 1893, a Banfera Naga who had settled in the Abhaipur mauza was murdered by the Lakrang Raja. The murderer was arrested by the police and committed to the Court of Sessions.

The Tiru path closed.

In 1892 and the following years, complaints were received from the General Manager of the Assam Tea Company of petty thefts committed by Nagas on the Dholbagan and Charaideo gardens. In February 1895, these petty annoyances culminated in the destruction by fire of a godown at Charaideo and of stores valued at about Rs 4,000. The chiefs of all the villages using the Tiru path were ordered to deliver up the culprits, or in alternative to pay a fine of Rs. 50 per village, and, as they failed to comply with these demands, the path was closed and a guard of 14 military policemen posted there to enforce the order. Three years later the guard was withdrawn as its retention was no longer considered to be necessary.

Nagas visit Tingalibam Garden in 1900 to demand surrender of fugitives.

In July 1900, the Joboka chief Vangping and three of his relations were murdered, and twenty-five of his relatives and friends fled to British territory to avoid sharing his fate. They reached the Tingalibam garden, and were followed there by parties of armed Nagas, who demanded their surrender. This was refused as the refugees declared that their lives would be in danger, and in the evening

they were sent to the Sonari outpost for protection. The pursuing Nagas remained some time on the garden, but fortunately committed no overt acts of violence. A small fine was, however, imposed on them for coming armed into British territory.

Archæological remains, Tanks.

The principal memorials of their rule left by the Ahoms in Sibsagar are the fine bunds, many of which are still used as roads, the temples, and the tanks. The total number of old tanks in the Sibsagar district is very large, but five stand out pre-eminent. The European station of Sibsagar has been built upon the banks of a tank of beautiful fresh water, which is about 1¾ miles in circumference, and is no less than 114 acres in area. About two miles south of Sibsagar is the Rudra Sagar tank, which has an area of 106 acres, and six miles west of Rudra Sagar is Gaurisagar (85 acres). These three tanks in themselves would satisfy the requirements of a dense population, but between Rudra Sagar and Gaurisagar there are two more great reservoirs, one north and one south of the road that runs to Gaurisagar. The northernmost is known as Athai Sagar and has an area of 103 acres, while immediately opposite is the Jay Sagar tank, area 118 acres. The fact that these great sheets of water are situated in such close proximity to one another is ample evidence that their designers were not actuated by any base utilitarian motives. These tanks are surrounded by moats from which earth was evidently taken for the embankment of the reservoir. The water level of the tank is thus higher than that of the encircling moat.

Temples.

The temples are built of thin flat bricks baked till they have almost reached the consistency of earthenware. They are nearly all of them of one design, and consist of an egg-shaped dome enclosing the shrine approached by a short nave. The outer wall of the dome is often adorned with bas-reliefs. A list of the temples in the district will be found appended to the following chapter. The temples on the Sibsagar tank are naturally the best known.

The palace and Rangghar at Rangpur.

The palace at Rangpur stands about a mile to the south of Sibsagar station. The following description is taken from the Report of the Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle, for the year 1902-03 :—

"It is a building of irregular shape, consisting of a long flight of rooms running from east to west, with several smaller wings in its northern and southern side. The lower storey apparently served principally as stables, store-rooms, servants' quarters, etc., while the royal apartments were located in the upper storey, which has now disappeared for the greater part. In the central northern wing is an octagonal room, which is now called the *pujar ghor*. Close to it a portion of the royal apartments still exists. It has a stair leading up to the terrace, and the anteroom is covered by a vaulted roof. South of it stands an isolated room, believed to have been used by the queen during her confinement. Another isolated room in the south-western corner of the palace is believed to have been used as a kitchen. The area within which the palace stands is surrounded by a wall, which is approximately two miles in circumference. Another isolated building inside this area is said to have been used as a powder magazine. It is called Karghar."

"The Rangghar stands outside the palace enclosure, to the west. It was the place from where the king used to watch buffalo-fights and other sports. Its erection is ascribed to Pramatta Sinha in the year 1744 A.D. It is the best preserved ruin of the ancient Ahom capital. Its shape is octagonal, but the northern and western sides are much longer than the other ones. Each of these

longer sides has three large and two small openings. The building has two storeys, each being divided internally into one large central room and two smaller ones at the eastern and western end. The position of the western chamber is occupied by the stairs leading to the upper storey, outside a gap is left in the staircase, sufficient to allow an elephant standing between it. A person mounted on an elephant thus could ascend the steps leading to the upper storey immediately from the back of his elephant, without dismounting first. The roof is crowned by three small turrets in its centre, and at its eastern and western end are the projecting heads of two small *makaras* or *jalbastis*."

Gargaon. Of the ruins of Gargaoṅ very little now remains. The palace was a three-storeyed building. The two lower storeys contained a single centre chamber with a verandah on each side, at each corner of which there was a small room. The top storey was nothing more than a cupola, the room being only five or six feet square. The building is at present in a very dilapidated state, but is possessed of some architectural merits.

Dimapur. Some of the most interesting remains in the Sibsagar district are, however, in no way connected with the Ahoms. The old Kachari capital at Dimapur is situated in the midst of the huge Nambar forest, which stretches a pathless wilderness of trees for many miles on every side. Prior to the construction of the railway it was extremely inaccessible,* and the existence of the remains of what must evidently have been a considerable city in the middle of this howling jungle affords a striking instance of the rapidity with which nature in the East can obliterate the handiwork of man. The enclosure

* It was 55 miles by road from Golaghat, and almost the whole of the way the road ran through the densest and most malarious of forests.

wall of the capital at Dimapur is made of thin flat native bricks, and, according to Dr. Bloch, is about one and a half miles in circumference.* It is entered by a brick gateway which belongs to the Bengali style of Muhammadan architecture, and which was probably erected under the direction of some foreigner like Ghonsyam, the Bengali architect of the Ahom Rajas. Within there are several rows of curious pillars, some shaped like gigantic pawns and others in the form of a capital V. A little to the south of the gate there are four rows, two of pawns and two of V-shaped pillars, consisting alternately of 16 and 17 monoliths. They are massive pieces of sandstone, those in the centre being about 13 feet high and 14 feet in circumference, and are ornamented with rude carvings in low relief of flowers, geometrical figures, and animals. A little to the west of this group of pillars there is a single pawn, the largest yet discovered, which is 16½ feet high and 23½ feet in circumference. North of this pillar there is another double row of pawn pillars, while to the south are the remains of more pillars, all of which are lying shattered on the ground and half buried in the earth. Local tradition has it that these pillars were erected at the place where animals were sacrificed by the Raja, and tradition is to some extent confirmed by the customs of the Nagas at the present day. These hospitable hillmen keep a record of their feasts and erect a round topped post when they have killed a mithun and a V-shaped post when they have slain a cow ; and these curious monoliths may thus commemorate some

* Annual Report of the Archæological Surveyor, Bengal Circle, for 1902-03.

particularly gorgeous banquet of the Kachari king. On the top of the V-shaped pillars there are mortice holes, but it hardly seems probable that they can ever have supported the roof of any building. All traces of this building, if any such existed, have at any rate completely disappeared. That Dimapur was once the centre of a crowded population is shown by the existence of a large number of tanks in the immediate vicinity. It is said that there are altogether fifty-two, but most are buried in impenetrable jungle, and it is not easy to ascertain their actual number. Some of them are of considerable size, the tank on which the inspection bungalow is built measuring about 300 yards along the shorter sides.

Ruins at Kasomari Pathar. In the forest near the Doiang, about one day's journey by boat from Jamaguri railway station, there are the remains of an old city. The earthen ramparts and moats are still visible, and seem to have extended for about half a mile each way. Within the ramparts are lines of pillars, and, in addition to the chessmen and V-shaped pillars of Dimapur, there are others of the shape of a sword or dagger. These ruins are described in the Report of the Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle, for the year 1904-05.

Miscellaneous. In the Maloa Pathar a little to the west of Jorhat town there is a large tumulus known as the *barbheti*, which is said to have been the site of the *nam ghor* of the Moamaria gosain in the latter half of the seventeenth century. According to the Ahòm chronicles, each disciple of the gosain brought one sod for the construction of this enormous mound, and this enabled him to ascertain their

number. Two smaller mounds near by are known as the *majur bheti* and the *majia bheti*, and were the sites of the houses of the gosain and his brother. Old Ahom cannon are common in the district, and there is one of really enormous size, which has been placed in position on the banks of the Sibsagar tank.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

AHOM KINGS.

A. D.	
1228	Sukapha.
1268	Sutenpha.
1281	Subinpha.
1293	Sukangpha.
1332	Sukampha.
1364	Sutupha - Treacherously killed by Chutiyas at a regatta held on the Safrai river to celebrate a cessation of hostilities between the two tribes.
1376-1380	Interregnum.
1380	Sukemthi - A weak and tyrannical prince, assassinated by his ministers.
1389-1398	Interregnum.
1398	Sudangpha.
1407	Siyangpha.
1422	Suphukpha.
1439	Susingpha—Defeats Nagas.
1488	Suhangpha-defeated by Kacharis in 1490, and murdered by a convict.
1493	Supimpha—A cruel prince, assassinated by his ministers.
1497	Suhunmung, *alias* Sarga Narayan or Dihingia Raja—Conquers Chutiyas and annexes their kingdom in 1523. Repulses two Muhammadan invasions, the second being that under Turbuk in 1532, who was routed near the Bhareli river. Kills Kachari king and sacks Dimapur, his capital, in 1536. Assassinated 1539.
1539	Sukhenmung—Built Gargaon (Nazira).
1552	Sukampha.
1611	Suchengpha or Pratap Singh - Assists Bali Narayan against Musalmans, besieges Hajo, but is driven back. Bar Nadi accepted as frontier between Muhammadans and Ahoms in 1637.
1649	Surumpha—Deposed.
1652	Suchingpha—Deposed.

MUHAMMADAN INVASIONS.

A. D.	
1204	Baktiar Khilji—Invades Assam.
1220	Ghiyas-ud-din Bahadur Shah—Advances to Sadiya, but is defeated.
1256	Iktiyarud-din Yuzbak Tughril Khan—Invades the Brahmaputra Valley, but is ultimately defeated
1337	Muhammed Shah - Sends a force "of 100,000 horsemen" into Assam, all of whom perish.

KOCH KINGS.

1509-1534	Viswa Singh—Founds Koch kingdom, advances against Ahoms but was apparently defeated.
1534-1584	Nar Narayan—Conquers Ahoms and occupies Gargaon, circa 1563 A. D. Subdues Raja of Cachar, Jaintia, Manipur, Tippera and Sylhet. Kala Pahar invades Assam in 1553 and destroys temples at Kamakhya and Hajo.
1581-1593	Raghu Rai—Obtains share of Koch kingdom east of Sankosh.
1593-1614	Parikshit—Builds North Gauhati, quarrels with his cousin Lakshmi Narayan, calls in Muhammadans to his aid.
1614-1637	Bali Narayan—Invokes aid of Ahoms against Muhammadans. From this date the Koch kings cease to be of any political importance.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—(*continued*).

AHOM KINGS.

A. D.	
1654	Sutumla or Jaiyadwaj Singh—Ahoms occupy Goalpara 1658. Driven back by Mir Jumla, who enters Gargaon, 1661.
1663	Chakradwaj—Ahoms re-occupy Gauhati in 1667.
1670	Adayaditya Singh—Assassinated.
1672	Suklumpha—Poisoned. Musalmans re-occupy Gauhati.
1674	Suhung—Assassinated.
1674	Teenkungiya—Assassinated.
1674	Suhungpha—Blinded and murdered.
1677	Sudinpha—Assassinated.
1679	Sulekpha (Lora Raja)—Assassinated.
1681	Gadadhar Singh—Ahoms recover possession of Gauhati.
1695	Rudra Singh—Founds Rangpur, defeats Kachari and Jaintia Rajas, publicly adopts Hinduism as his religion. This period represents the height of the Ahom power. Dies at Gauhati.
1714	Sib Singh—A weak prince, who resigned in favour of his wives. Excavated tank at Sibsagar.
1744	Pramatta Singh.
1751	Rajeswar Singh—Decline of Ahom power.
1769	Lakshmi Singh—Outbreak of Moamaria rebellion—king deposed for a time, but subsequently reinstated.
1780	Gaurinath Singh—Driven to Gauhati by Moamarias. Reinstated by Captain Welsh in 1792, who is, however, recalled in 1794. Krishna Narayan, Darrang Raja, asserts his independence in 1792, but is defeated by Captain Welsh.
1795	Kamaleswar Singh—Deposes Krishna Narayan.
1809	Chandra Kanta Singh—Burmese are invited into Assam by Bor Phukan. Deposed 1816.
1816	Purandar Singh—Burmese again enter Assam. Deposed 1818.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—(*concluded*).

A. D.	AHOM KINGS.
1818	Chandra Kanta Singh—Burmese decline to leave. Chandra Kanta driven from Assam in 1820.
1824	War declared between British and Burmese Governments.
1825	Rangpur taken.
1826	Treaty of Yandaboo, by which Assam was ceded to the East India Company.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

Area and density—Towns and villages—Growth of population—Migration—Sex and marriage—Infirmities—Language—Cas e and tribe—Religion—Saktism—Sivaitism—Vaishnavism—The Sattras of Sibsagar—Muhammadans—A nimism—Other religions—Christians—Occupations—Marriage customs—Amusements and festivals—List of sattras.

The district covers an area of 4,996 square miles, and in 1901 had a density of 120 to the square mile or 33 less than that reported from Kamrup. It must not, however, be supposed from this that Sibsagar is sparsely peopled. West of the Dhansiri there is very little population, but a dense population would be an impossibility in the Mikir Hills. Equally difficult would it be to settle many persons in the flooded tracts that fringe the Brahmaputra, but south of this flooded area and east of the Dhansiri there is no lack of inhabitants. In Golaghat there are considerable areas with a population of over 300 to the square mile. In the Jorhat tahsil there was, in 1901, a density of 441, while two mauzas near the town had a density of no less then 621. In Sibsagar, too, the area covered by the Sibsagar and Namtidol tahsils and the Hachara and Joktali mauzas, 344 square miles in all, had a density of 341. Even in the more densely settled tracts Sibsagar is in no way overpeopled, but the pressure on the soil is much more severe than the figure **Area and density.**

of density for the district would at first suggest. Table III shows the population and density in each minor unit in 1901.

Towns and villages. Sibsagar contains three small towns, Sibsagar (population 1901, 5,712), Jorhat (population 1901, 2,899), and Golaghat (population 1901, 2,359) and 2,109 villages. The villages are not, however, well defined units, clusters of huts which stand out clearly in the centre of the fields tilled by their inhabitants. Rice, the staple crop, is grown in wide plains, dotted over with clumps of bamboos and fruit trees in which are buried the houses of the cultivators. It is groves and not villages that the traveller sees when riding through the more densely populated portions of the district, and not a house can usually be seen till he has penetrated this jungle of plantains, betel-nut trees, and bamboos. There is generally no dearth of building sites, there are no communal lands, and there is nothing to keep the population together. It is difficult to tell where one village ends and another begins, or to which of the larger clumps of trees should be assigned the smaller clumps which are freely dotted about amongst the rice fields. The result is that the statistics of villages are of little practical importance, but, taking them for what they are worth, it appears that villages run small, and in 1901 about half the population were living in hamlets with less than 500 inhabitants.

Growth of population. In 1841, Mr. Robinson estimated that the population of Sibpur, which was bounded on the west by the Dhansiri and on the north by the Brahmaputra and thus

excluded the Mikir Hills and the Majuli, was 200,000 souls.* A census of the district including the Majuli taken in 1844 showed a population of 159,573 persons; but this census was probably more inaccurate than the Deputy Commissioner imagined, and even he was of opinion that the population was about 180,000.† In 1872, the first census of the whole of the Province was taken, and though it was non-synchronous it was probably more accurate than any of its predecessors. The abstract in the margin shows what a large and steady increase has taken place at each of the three last enumerations. A great part of this increase is due to the coolies who have been imported in large numbers to work on the tea gardens situated in the district; but it is satisfactory to know that, in contradistinction to Lower and Central Assam, there has been a substantial natural growth of population. Natural growth is perhaps best measured by the increase in the number of those born and censused in the district, and this amounted to nearly 13 per cent between 1881 and 1891, and to nearly 17 per cent in the next decade. Many of these so-called natives are the children of foreign mothers, but the caste table shows that between 1891 and 1901 indigenous castes and tribes, who might fairly be classified as "Assamese," increased by 8½ per cent.

	Population.	Percentage variation.
1872	317,799	
1881	392,545	+23·5
1891	480,659	+22·4
1901	597,969	+24·4

* Robinson's Descriptive Account of Assam—Calcutta, 1841, p. 317.

† Report on Assam by A. J. Moffatt Mills—Calcutta, 1854. Sibsagar, p. 2.

Increase by subdivisions.

The statement in the margin shows that during the last decade the increase has been especially pronounced in the Sibsagar subdivision. This, no doubt, is largely due to the fact that during this period there has been a large increase in the area under tea, which necessitates a corresponding increase in the labour force. Further there is more waste land available for settlement in Sibsagar than in Jorhat, where the population is already fairly dense, and this is a fact which naturally largely influences settlers when they leave the gardens.

Subdivision.	Population 1901.	Percentage of increase. 1891-1901	1881-1891
Sibsagar	211,809	+ 32·1	+ 24·1
Jorhat	219,137	+ 20·9	+ 23·1
Golaghat	167,023	+ 19·9	+ 23·3

Migration.

In 1901, 151,612 persons, or just a little over one fourth of the total population had been born outside the frontiers of Assam. About one half of these people came from the Chota Nagpur division of Bengal, which supplies Assam with the healthiest but most costly of her labourers, while one-quarter came from other places in that Province. Upwards of 18,000 persons came from the Central Provinces; nearly 9,000 from the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh; and over 4,000 from Madras. The great bulk of these persons had been imported to the tea gardens as coolies. There were a few artizans and carpenters from China and the Punjab, and a few natives of Bombay, who were either employed on the railway or interested in the liquor trade. The natives of Afghanistan are the Kabulis or pedlars who travel all over the Province in the cold

weather. The Nepalese are for the most part graziers who keep large herds of buffalo on the marshes near the Brahmaputra, and the natives of Rajputana are the shrewd Marwari merchants who have succeeded in monopolising practically the whole of the trade of the Assam Valley. As far as inter-district migration is concerned, Sibsagar sends settlers to the waste lands of Lakhimpur and Darrang, and receives labourers from Kamrup and Goalpara. Statistics of birthplace by sub-divisions will be found in Table V.

Sex and marriage. The proportion of women in Sibsagar has always been unusually low. In 1872, there were only 919 women to every thousand men, and since that date the ratio has declined till, in 1901, there were only 886. This disproportion between the sexes is partly due to immigration, but the effects of immigration can be discounted by working out the ratio on those born in the district and censused in the Province. Women, however, still remain in a pronounced minority, and in 1901 there were only 925 to every thousand males. This ratio is lower than that returned from any other district in Assam, and differs in the most marked degree from that recorded in the neighbouring district of Nowgong, where it was as high as 1,016. The causes which determine the proportion of the sexes are most obscure, but generally speaking there seems to be a tendency for the number of women to increase where public health is bad and vitality low. This would serve to account for the strength of the female element in the population of Now-

gong, but leaves the scarcity of women in Sibsagar unexplained. Unskilful midwifery and the debilitating effects of excessive child bearing probably tend to shorten the lives of the mothers of the race.

Percentage of Hindu girls married and widowed.

	Age. 0—10	Age. 10—15
Sibsagar	0·6	10·9
Goalpara	4·8	62·4

Percentage of Hindu girls unmarried.

	Age. 15—20
Sibsagar	47·7
Goalpara	7·2

It is satisfactory, at any rate, to know that the deficiency of women is not due to the prevalence of early marriage. The figures in the margin show the percentage of Hindu girls under 10 and between 10 and 15, who have performed the marriage ceremony; and the proportion between 15 and 20, who even according to Western ideas would be considered *aptae viro*, who are still unwed. For the purposes of comparison, the figures for Goalpara have been included, as unfortunately in that district the idea has gradually gained ground that social advancement can in some way be obtained by subjecting an immature child to the responsibilities of matrimony. For every child wife or widow under 10 in Sibsagar, there are 8 in Goalpara; and between 10 and 15 the proportion in the two districts is as 1 to 6. The proportion of potential mothers, *i. e.*, married women between 15 and 40 is obviously a factor which materially affects the growth of the people. In this respect Sibsagar is somewhat at a disadvantage as they only form 158 per mille of the total population; and, though this is one above the average for the Province as a whole, it is much below

the figure for the Central Provinces which in 1901 was 169.

Infirmities

Number in 10,000 males afflicted in 1901.

	Sibsagar.	Assam.	India.
Blindness ...	5	10	12
Deaf-mutism ...	6	9	6
Insanity ...	4	5	3
Leprosy ...	13	13	5

From the statement in the margin it will be seen that Sibsagar is fairly free from three out of the four special infirmities selected for record at the census. The proportion of lunatics, though higher than that for the Indian Empire as a whole, is lower than the average for the Province, while the proportion of deaf-mutes is below, and that of the blind largely below the provincial average. The number of lepers is, however, considerable, and the ratio of those afflicted with this dire disease in 1901 was nearly three times as high as that recorded for the Indian Empire as a whole. In this respect Sibsagar is in no way peculiar, as, for reasons which have hitherto completely baffled medical science, leprosy has always been extremely prevalent in Assam.

Language.

Fifty-nine per cent of the people in 1901 returned Assamese as their customary form of speech, 4 per cent Mikir, and 2 per cent Miri, two other languages indigenous to the Province. Bengali was returned by 19 per cent of the people, but it is doubtful whether to an Assamese enumerator Bengali means anything more than a foreign language, and this term probably included many forms of speech which would have been hardly intelligible at Nadia. Six and a half per cent of the people reported that they spoke Hindustani. Assamese is described by

Mr. Grierson as the sister not the daughter of Bengali.* It comes from Bihar through Northern Bengal and not from Bengal Proper. The plural and the feminine gender are formed in a different way from that in use in Bengali, and there is a considerable difference in the conjugation of the verb, in the idiom, the syntax, and even in the vocabulary. The pronunciation is also different, the Bengali sh being converted into h by the Assamese and ch into s

Caste and Tribe.

The caste distribution of Sibsagar is such as a perusal of the history of the district would lead one to expect. Brahmans are fairly numerous, as is only natural in the neighbourhood of the Raja's court. Kayasthas have been attracted to the district, partly in hope of employment under the Ahom kings, partly to work on the gardens which provide employment for a large number of the clerkly caste. Other respectable castes such as the Kalita, the Kewat, and the Koch, are fairly numerous, especially in Jorhat. The principal caste is, however, the Ahoms, who are especially numerous in the Sibsagar subdivision. Outside tea gardens and the camps of railway coolies, very nearly every second person in this subdivision in 1901 was a member of this caste. The number in Jorhat, though considerable, was nothing like so large, and Golaghat contained barely one-sixth of the number found in Sibsagar. The Chutiyas are also strongly represented, and most of them are found in Jorhat, as are also the Nadiyals or fishing folk. The tea industry

* Report on the Census of India, 1901, Vol. I, p. 324.

is of great importance, and the European population of the district in 1901 was no less than 356. The cooly castes most strongly represented were the Santals, Mundas, and Bhuiyas; but it is hardly necessary to particularize further as details for all the more important castes will be found in Table V. The following pages contain a brief account of the indigenous castes and tribes which had more than 5,000 representatives in the district in 1901. An alphabetical glossary of all the castes censused in Assam will be found in Chapter XI of the Report on the Census of that year.

Ahom.

Males	... 56,900
Females	... 54,219

The Ahoms are the descendants of the Shan tribe who entered Assam in the thirteenth century, and gradually extended their sway over the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley. They are divided into three sections, the Chamuas or gentry, the Kheluas or functional sections, and the Meluas or servants of the royal family. These sections are not endogamous, though there is a natural tendency for men to take wives from families in their own rank of life, and inter-marriage between certain families such as the Handikoi and the Pakimara is prohibited, for reasons which are not very clear. The Ahoms still possess a sturdier physique than the ordinary Assamese, and the Muhammadan chronicler of Mir Jumla's invasion describes them as "strong, quarrelsome, and bold." The complexion is fair, the cheek bones high, and the face unusually broad. Practically all the Ahoms are now, in name at any rate,

Hindus, but their new religion sits lightly on them, and the lower orders still bury their dead. As amongst the other humbler Assamese castes, cohabitation often takes place after a feast has been given to the villagers and there is nothing in the nature of a religious ceremony. The more respectable form is the *chaklong*, which consists in the interchange of the *temi* and *katari*, the box in which betel-nut is carried and the knife with which it is cut ; the tying of the nuptial knot and a feast to the friends and relations. A hole is then cut in the corner of the house through which the bride is removed. A woman once married by the *chaklong* ceremony cannot be re-married by the same rite, though she can take a second husband by the simpler form of marriage which is known as *gur pithaguri*. Divorce is recognized, and the parties can marry again. Agricuture is the staple occupation of the caste. Their social position is a somewhat peculiar one. The fact that, prior to our occupation of the country, they were the ruling race obtains for them a considerable measure of respect, but the recency of their conversion to Hinduism necessitates a very low place in the Brahmanical order, and Brahmans will not, as a rule, take water from their hands.

Borias.

Males	...	2,747
Females	...	2,601

The Borias are a caste peculiar to Assam, which is formed from the offspring of Brahman and Ganak widows and their descendants. Boria is said to be derived from "bari", a widow, but the people prefer to call themselves Sut. This term is said by some to be

connected with the word Sudra, and by others to be derived from Sut, the expounder of the Puranas, who was himself the son of a Brahman widow. But the most plausible explanation seems to be that it is an abbreviation of Suta, the name given in the Shastras to the offspring of a Brahman woman by a Vaisya or Kshattriya father. One authority defines a Boria as the child of a Brahman widow, and a Sut as the result of union between a Sudra widow and a Brahman; but it is doubtful whether this explanation is correct, as in the latter case the child would presumably be of the same caste as its mother. The children of Brahman girls, who have attained puberty before marriage and so have to be married to men of a lower caste, are also classed with Borias. Agriculture is the ordinary occupation of the Borias, and their manners and customs do not differ materially from those of other low caste Assamese.

Brahmans.

Males ...	8,090
Females ...	6,348

There are more Brahmans in Sibsagar than in any other district of Assam except Kamrup and Sylhet; but this is only natural as priests are generally found in close propinquity to a native court. The Brahmans of Sibsagar are supposed to have originally come from Upper India, Mithila, Orissa, Benares, and Kanouj, and have little in common with the Brahmans of Bengal. The great majority are natives of Assam, but there are a few Bengali Brahmans, who in social questions keep themselves quite distinct from their Assamese *confrères*. The great centres of the Brahman population are Dergaon, the neighbourhood of Jorhat, and

the Majuli. Most of the Assamese Brahmans obtain their living from agriculture, though they are not of course allowed to plough with their own hands. Foreign Brahmans are generally employed in some ministerial capacity.

Males ... 29,057
Females ... 27,973

The Chutiyas, like the Koch and the Ahoms, are one of the race castes of Assam. Their physical appearance suggest a Mongolian origin, their language, which is still preserved amongst the Deoris or priestly clan, belongs to the Bodo family, and it seems probable that they are a section of the great Bodo race which includes the Garo, the Kachari, and the Tippera. It is supposed that their original home was in the hills through which the Subansiri makes its way, and that they entered the Assam Valley about a thousand years ago. The story of the decline and fall of the Chutiya power has already been told in the preceding chapter. Their conquerors wisely deported the leading families to different parts of the Assam Valley, but the great mass of the Chutiyas are still to be found in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. The caste is divided into four subdivisions, Hindu, Ahom, Deori, and Borahi. The latter, as their name implies, are still unconverted and eat pork, but the number of Borahi Chutiyas is very small.

The Deori Chutiyas.

The Deori Chutiya are the old priestly caste, and are described as follows in the Census Report of 1901 :—

"Their original home was on the banks of the Kundil river east of Sadiya, but when the Ahom power began to decline, they were harried by the hill tribes in the neighbourhood, and at the

beginning of the century they migrated to North Lakhimpur, and from there moved to the Majuli, the Dikrang river, Sissi Mukh, and the Baligao mauza in Jorhat. The Mongolian type is much more strongly marked in them than in the ordinary Chutiya, and they might easily be mistaken for Miris. They keep pigs and fowls, but their most distinguishing characteristic is the enormous size of the houses in which they dwell. These houses are built on *changs*, and are enlarged from time to time to make room for the increasing size of the family. There are frequently as many as sixty persons living in one long barrack, and the Chutiyas themselves say that there are sometimes double this number living under one roof. The Deori Chutiyas on the Majuli profess to be Hindus, but beef is the only article of food from which they abstain, and it is said that all that they could remember of the instructions of their Gosain was that they were to pray to God, and keep their instructions secret; and it was possibly with the idea of avoiding any risk of indiscretion that they had so carefully forgotten all that they had been told. Their temples are copies in wood and thatch of the famous copper temple at Sadiya, which was at one time a centre of worship for all the hill tribes on the north-east frontier, but has long been in ruins. These models are small buildings about eight feet square, raised on high bamboos, and not unlike pigeon houses in appearance, standing in enclosures, into which no one but the temple officials are allowed to enter. In the principal village on the Majuli, a copper roof is being placed on the model to render the resemblance more complete. Mr. Brown, who was at one time Assistant Commissioner in North Lakhimpur, reports that the Deoris attach great importance to their own religion, but that a knowledge of its mysteries is apparently confined to the priests and the older men. There are four priests attached to each khel, the Bar and Saru Deori and the Bar and Saru Bharali. The two Deoris alone are entitled to enter the temple, and the Bharalis, as their name implies, are mainly concerned with the temporalities of the goddess.

The chief gods are three Gerasi Geri (Assamese 'Buraburi') worshipped by the Debongia khel; Pishadema (Assamese 'Boliya hemata'), the elder son, worshipped by the Tengapaniya khel; and Peshasi (the daughter), who is also known as Tameshari Mai (the mother of the copper temple), and Kechakhati (the eater of raw flesh). The latter name is given in memory of the annual human sacrifice which in former times used to be

offered to the goddess, the victim being provided by the Ahom Raja. This abomination was discontinued during the reign of Gaurinath Singh, and, according to the Deoris, the downfall of the Ahoms was largely due to the neglect of this religious rite.

The human sacrifices at the copper temple.

The following interesting account of the human sacrifices offered near Sadiya is extracted from a note left by Lieutenant Dalton in the library of the Nowgong office :—

" The chief and oldest of the shrines was the Tamar Ghar, or copper temple, which still exists in ruins and was lately visited by Captain Vetch. It is described as a small stone building nearly square, built without cement, the stones joined by iron pins not clamped. The roof was of copper, but it has fallen in, and now lies there. The interior is eight feet square. The whole is enclosed within a brick wall 130 feet by 200. Near the grand entrance in the western wall is a small stone tripod. Here human sacrifices were yearly offered till a very recent date, but latterly the Ahom kings gave for the purpose malefactors who had been sentenced to capital punishment. Suitable victims of this description were not, however, always to be obtained, and then a particular *khel* or tribe of the king's subjects was bound to provide one, for which they had certain privileges and immunities accorded them, such as being exempted from the payment of ferry and market duties ; and were thence called *Sarh*, or free. For it was necessary that, the victims to be immolated, should be of pure caste and perfect form; the slightest blemish or mutilation, even the boring of an ear, rendering them unfit to be offered to the Gosaini, or goddess. Brahmans and members of the royal family were exempted as a privilege ; Doms, Haris, Musalmans and women were excluded as unfit. For some time preceding the sacrifice the victim to be immolated was detained at the temple, where he fared sumptuously, till in sufficiently plump condition to suit the supposed taste of the Gosaini. On the day appointed he was led forth magnificently attired and decorated with gold and silver ornaments to be shown to the multitude that assembled on the occasion; then withdrawn and led by a private path trodden only by the officiating priests and their victim to the brink of a deep pit, where he was divested of his fineries and decapitated, so that the body fell into the pit. The head was added to a heap of ghastly skulls that were piled in view of the shrine. These sacrifices appear to have continued till the subversion of the

Ahom Government by the Burmese, when the Deoris abandoned their ancient possessions in the vicinity of the copper temple, to the fearful rites of which they had for upwards of six centuries administered, with the slaughter by their own account of some six hundred human victims."

Ahom Chutiyas.

The Ahom Chutiyas have for some generations been converts to Hinduism, but in the social scale they rank below the Hindu Chutiya, and their presence in a house is said to debar a Brahman from drinking water there. The Ahoms and Hindu Chutiyas can smoke but cannot eat together, and, in theory, cannot inter-marry. A member of the Ahom section can, however, obtain a Hindu Chutiya girl if he is willing to pay a slightly higher price for her, but the bride sinks to the status of her husband.

Marriage customs.

Hindu Chutiyas are sometimes united by the *hompura* ceremony, while the *chaklong* rite, which is the Ahom form of marriage, is in vogue amongst the Ahom Chutiyas. The Chutiyas are, however, far from strict in their views on matrimonial matters, and one native gentleman reports that 50 per cent of the so-called married couples have performed no ceremony at all, and that a girl sometimes changes her husband nine or ten times. The social position of the caste is low, and almost all of them are petty cultivators. They burn their dead and perform the *sradh* ceremony at the expiry of a month. Brahmans of inferior social standing act as their priests.

Jugis.

Males	...	3,424
Females	...	2,867

The Jugis are a low caste whose traditional occupation is weaving. In Sibsagar, under native rule, the Jugis were entrusted with the task

of rearing the *pat* silk worms, while the Katanis, a subdivision of the caste, spun the thread. They have now largely taken to agriculture, and silkworm rearing is only practised as a subsidiary occupation. Like other humble castes they lay claim to a high origin. According to one account they are the offspring of Brahman widows and ascetics or jogis, while others assert that they are descended from Gorakshanath, who was an incarnation of Siva. In Sibsagar, the name Jugi is derived from *joga* to supply, because they fed the worms while the Katanis spun the thread. Others connect it with *jugieri*, the name of a creeper whose leaves are eaten by the *pat* worm. The Jugis are endeavouring to improve their social position by celebrating the *hompura* rite, when their circumstances admit of such expenditure, and by burning instead of burying their dead; but good class Brahmans still decline to serve as their priests.

Kacharis.

An account of the origin of the Kacharis has already been given in the preceding chapter, and of the difference that exists between the Dimasa and the Bodo.

Males ...	.. 10,036
Females ...	... 6,582

In Lower Assam, Kacharis, when they are converted to Hinduism, are generally incorporated into the ranks of the Koch caste, and the number of Hindu Kacharis is comparatively small. In Sibsagar this is not the case. The great majority of the caste have been converted to Hinduism, and most of them have foresworn pigs, fowls

and liquor, and live much as do the other humble Hindu castes. They do not as a rule attempt to change their names, though, of recent years, some have taken to calling themselves Ahoms or Chutiyas or occasionally Koch, and there is one family of Kachari priests who actually style themselves Kayastha. The broad distinction which in Lower Assam exists between the Kachari and the ordinary lower caste Assamese is hardly to be found in Sibsagar, and the tribe has lost its special tribal characteristics.

Kalita.

Males	...	... 19,790
Females	...	... 16,837

The following description of the Kalitas is reproduced from the Report on the Census of 1901 :—

"There is much uncertainty as to the origin of this caste. The popular explanation is, that Kalitas are Kshatriyas, who, fleeing from the wrath of Parasu Ram, concealed their caste and their persons in the jungles of Assam, and were thus called Kullupta. Other theories are that they are Kayasthas degraded for having taken to cultivation, an explanation which in itself seems somewhat improbable, and is not supported, as far as I am aware, by any evidence ; or that they are the old priestly caste of the Bodo tribe. The latter theory can hardly be said to account for their origin, and though it is possible that Kalitas may have originally acted as priests, this fact throws little or no light on the problem of what the Kalitas are. The most plausible suggestion is that they are the remains of an Aryan colony, who settled in Assam, at a time when the functional castes were still unknown in Bengal, and that the word 'Kalita' was originally applied to all Aryans who were not Brahmans.

"The Kalitas are divided into two main subdivisions, Bar and Saru, and into a number of professional subcastes. In Upper Assam, Bar Kalitas are said to decline to use the plough, though they occasionally work with the spade, but there is no such restriction in Kamrup, where the great bulk of the caste is found.

Cultivation is, in fact, the traditional occupation of the caste, and they even consent to work as coolies on tea gardens. The usual procedure for a Kalita who has succeeded in rising above the necessity for manual labour, and is no longer compelled to follow the plough, is to call himself a Kaist or Kayastha. Two explanations are given of the origin of the Saru Kalita—one, that he is the offspring of persons who for three generations back have not been united by the '*hom*' ceremony, the other that he is the child of a Bar Kalita and a Kewat woman. Whether the Bar Kalita can inter-marry with, and eat *kachchi* with, the Saru Kalita seems open to question, and the practice apparently varies in different districts; but there seems to be no doubt that the functional subdivisions of the caste are debarred from the privilege of close intercourse with the Bar Kalita. These subdivisions are the Mali, Sonari, Kamar, Kumhar, Napit, Nat, Suri and Dhoba. The first two inter-marry with the Saru Kalita, and also with the Kamar Kalita. The last four groups are endogamous. All these functional groups are to some extent looked down upon, probably because followers of these professions, who were not true Kalitas, have occasionally succeeded in obtaining admission within their rank; but the goldsmiths, from their wealth, have secured a good position in society. Kalitas have a good Brahman for their priest, and their water is taken by every caste, a fact which no doubt explains the high value attached to Kalita slaves in the time of the Assam Rajas, when two Koches could be purchased for the price of a single Kalita, though the Koch is generally the hardier and stronger man of the two."

Early marriage is common in Goalpara, but not in Assam Proper, except amongst the upper sections of the caste. They take, in fact, a liberal view of the relations between the sexes, and cohabitation is the essential part of marriage. Well-to-do Kalitas are invariably united by the *hompura* rite and employ a Brahman. The poorer people often content themselves with the *agchauldia* or *juron* ceremonies, which consist of a feast to the villagers and a public acknowledgment of the position of the bride. Some authorities hold that this, though a valid form of marriage for the lower Assamese castes, is

not sufficient for the Kalita. They regard the *hompura* rite as the one essential ceremony of purification. But it can be performed after cohabitation has begun, and sometimes takes place after the death of the husband. An unmarried girl who becomes pregnant, does not forfeit her position in the society, unless her lover is of lower caste.

Kayasthas.

Males	2,078
Females	1,713

Many of the Kayasthas are foreigners, and most of them earn their living as clerks or officers in the employ of Government or of the Managers of different tea gardens. Kalitas who have risen above the necessity for manual labour frequently describe themselves as Kayasthas.

Kewats.

Males	14,024
Females	12,261

The Kewats are a respectable Hindu caste, from whose hands Brahmans will take water, and who, according to Assamese ideas, rank immediately after the Kalita. These remarks only hold good, however, of the Halwa or cultivating Kewats, as the Jaliya, or fishing subdivision of the caste, occupy a very humble position in the social scale, and are considered little better than Nadiyals. The two sections of the caste have nothing whatever in common except the name Kewat or Kaibartta, but the number of Jaliya Kewats is comparatively small. The ordinary occupation of the caste is agriculture, but a few of them have succeeded in reaching that desirable position in which the pen takes the place of the ploughshare as a means of livelihood. A respectable Brahman acts as their priest.

Mikirs.

Males	...	... 11,687
Females	...	... 11,224

According to Colonel Dalton, the Mikirs were originally settled in the North Cachar Hills, but were driven westward into Jaintia territory by the Kacharis. Dissatisfied with the reception accorded to them there they sent an embassy to the Ahom governor at Raha, offering to place themselves under the protection of his master: but, as the luckless delegates were unable to make themselves understood, they were forthwith buried alive in a tank which that officer happened to be excavating. Hostilities ensued, but the Mikirs were soon suppressed, and were settled in the hills that bear their name, though a considerable colony is still to be found in South Kamrup and the northern slopes of the Khasi Hills. They are divided into four tribes, Chintong, Ronghang, Amri, and Dumrali; and these tribes are again subdivided into various exogamous groups. In the hills the Mikirs live by *jhum* or shifting cultivation and raise crops of cotton, chillies, rice, and vegetables. All the members of a family live in one house which is thus of considerable size. Their religion is of the usual animistic type, and is chiefly concerned with the propitiation of evil spirits. Infant marriage is unknown and sexual license within the tribe prior to marriage is tolerated. From Table V it will be seen that Mikirs are only found in the Golaghat subdivision. For further information with regard to this tribe, reference should be made to the Monograph by Sir Charles Lyall, K.C.S.I., which is now under preparation.

Miris.

The Miris, or as they style themselves, Mishing, were originally settled in the hills to the north of the Lakhimpur district, between the

Males	... ...	9,372
Females	... ...	8,260

Dafla and the Abor territory. They are thought to be members of the Thibeto-Burman family, and, if this is so, are akin to the Bodo or Kacharis, Garos, Rabhas, Meches and other cognate tribes. Their countenances are of a distinctly Mongolian type, but their appearance is by no means unpleasing. They are strongly built, with finely developed limbs, and their complexions often have a distinctly ruddy hue. They are cleaner in their persons than many of the Thibeto-Burman tribes, and fully appreciate the advantages of the bath. The Miris are divided into two main endogamous septs, the Barogams and the Dohgams, which are again subdivided into a large number of minor groups. In the plains they always live near running water. Their dwellings are built on piles, and are sometimes as much as 40 yards in length and contain from twenty to thirty inmates. Pigs and fowls scratch about beneath the houses, which are usually built in two long rows, and differ from those of the Assamese in having no fruit trees or gardens round them. The Miris support themselves by agriculture, and raise crops of summer rice, mustard, millet, pulse, and sweet potatoes. Though nearly half the Miris of Sibsagar describe themselves as Hindus, they have liberal notions with regard to diet, and eat pork and buffalo flesh and drink rice beer. Their marriages are somewhat costly affairs, and entail considerable expenditure upon food, which is

borne by the families of both contracting parties. Sexual intercourse before marriage is not regarded with much disfavour, and traces of polyandry are to be found in the fact that adultery with a member of the husband's family is considered less heinous than if the offence is committed outside the clan. The dead are usually buried, and the funeral ceremonies include a substantial feast. The Miri religion is of the ordinary animistic type. Its principal feature is the propitiation of malignant spirits likely to do harm. The tribe believe in the immortality of the soul, but do not attempt to dogmatize on the subject and are somewhat impressed by the fact that the dead never return to this world.

The Nadiyals.

Males	11,815
Females	11,234

The Doms, or as they prefer to call themselves Nadiyals, are the boating and fishing caste of Assam. They are anxious to assume the name Jaliya Kaibartta, but the Kaibarttas are unquestionably a different caste, though their manners and customs do not differ materially from that of the Assamese Nadiyal, except in the following particular. The Kaibarttas decline to use the *ghokata* net, and in theory only sell their fish on the river's bank within a paddle's throw of the boat, whereas the Nadiyals regularly take their catch to market. The Nadiyals are probably descended from the aboriginal race of Doms, the ruins of whose forts are still to be seen in India, but migrated to Assam before the Dom caste had been assigned the degrading functions now performed by them in Bengal. They are cleanly in their habits and particu-

lar in their observance of the dictates of the Hindu religion, and account for the objectionable expression "Dom," which undoubtedly they have borne for centuries, by saying that they were the last of the Assamese to be converted from Buddhism. They are darker in complexion than most of the Assamese, but have a good physique, and by no means uncomely faces. Their women are most prolific, and the Dom villages are full of fat brown babies. They rank very low in the social scale, and, according to Assamese ideas, are superior only to the Brittial Baniya or Hari. The bulk of the caste still live by fishing, and education has made but little progress among them. Marriage does not take place till the girl is fully grown, and they are free from any puritanical notions with regard to the relations between the sexes. Their priests are said to be descended from a Brahman father and Nadiyal mother, but for all practical purposes they are Nadiyals and inter-marry with Nadiyal girls.

The Rajbansi or Koch.

Males	14,704
Females	13,027

The Koches are one of the race castes of Assam. Originally they were an aboriginal tribe, apparently of Mongolian origin, which at the beginning of the sixteenth century rose to power under their great leader Viswa Singh. His son, Nar Narayan, extended his conquests as far as Upper Assam, Tippera, and Manipur, and by the middle of the sixteenth century the Koch king had attained to a position of such power that the aboriginal people were anxious to be enrolled as members of his tribe. The result is that at the

present day the name is no longer that of a tribe but of a caste into which new converts to Hinduism are enrolled. In Sibsagar and Lakhimpur these converts still retain their tribal names, and the Koch is a respectable Sudra caste, which is not broken up into various subdivisions. This is not the case in Lower Assam, and the different groups are there allotted a different status, which is dependent on the time that has elapsed since conversion took place and the extent to which aboriginal habits have been shaken off.

Religion.

Classified by religion, the population of Sibsagar was distributed in the following proportions in 1901—Hinduism 89 per cent; Animism 7 per cent; and Muhammadanism 4 per cent. The three principal sects of Hinduism recorded at the census of 1901 were Saktism, Sivaitism, and Vaishnavism.

Hindus. Saktists.

Thirty per cent of the Hindus who returned their sect in 1901 described themselves as followers of Sakti, or worshippers of the reproductive powers as manifested in the female. Nearly five-sevenths of these Saktists were, however, censused on the tea plantations, and a considerable number of those living in the villages were probably ex-garden coolies. The great majority of these persons were no doubt so styled, because they ate meat and drank liquor, though this in a garden coolie is often not so much an indication of his adherence to the goddess Kali, as of the uncertainty of his title to the name of Hindu at all. Saktism is a foreign growth in Assam, and Vaishnavism is the national form of Hinduism.

Many of the Ahom kings were, however, supporters of the Saktists, and a list of the temples erected through their liberality will be found appended to this chapter.

Sivaitism. Sivaitism is the counterpart of Saktism, and is concerned with the worship of the procreative energy as manifested in the male. In 1901, 8,090 persons in Sibsagar professed this special form of Hinduism. It is, however, doubtful whether the distinction between the worshippers of Siva and Sakti was very clearly understood.

Vaishnavism. A considerable number of Hindus did not attempt to specify their sect in 1901, but of those who committed themselves to this extent nearly 68 per cent declared their adherence to Vaishnavism. The following description of the development of Vaishnavism in Assam is extracted from the Report on the Census of 1901.

"Sankar Deb, the apostle of Vaishnavism in Assam, was born in 1449 A. D., and was the descendant of a Kayastha, who, according to tradition, had been sent, with six of his caste fellows and seven Brahmans, to Assam by the king of Kanaijpur as a substitute for the Assamese prime minister, who had fled to his court for refuge. The licentious rites of Saktism had aroused his aversion while he was still a boy, and his desire to found a purer system of religion was increased by the teachings of Chaitanya in Bengal. Like most reformers, he met with vehement opposition from the supporters of the established order, and he was compelled to leave his home in Nowgong and to fly to the inhospitable jungles of the Barpeta subdivision. Here in conjunction with his disciple Madhab Deb, he founded the Mahapurushia sect, the main tenets of which are the prohibition of idolatry and sacrifice, disregard of caste, and the worship of God by hymns and prayers only. Sankar himself was, like a true follower of Chaitanya, a vegetarian, but the low-caste people who formed a larger proportion of his converts, found his injunction a counsel of perfection. The Mahapurushias are accordingly allowed to eat the flesh of game, but not of domesticated animals, though, with a subtlety only too

common in this country, they observe the letter of the law, prohibiting the spilling of blood, by beating their victims to death. The great centre of the Mahapurushia faith is the *sattra* at Barpeta, where a large number of persons persist in living, huddled together, in defiance of all the laws of sanitation, and resist with surprising pertinacity all efforts to improve their condition. They are a peculiarly bigoted people, and are strongly opposed to vaccination, with the result that the mortality from small-pox in the neighbourhood of the *sattra* is exceptionally high. It was not long, however, before the Brahmans re-asserted their influence, and shortly after Sankar's death, two of his followers, who were members of this caste, established sects, called, after their founders, Damodariya and Hari Deb Panthi, which are distinguished from the Mahapurushias, by the respect paid to the distinctions of caste, and a certain tolerance of idolatry. A fourth sect was founded by one Gopal Deb, but it originally seems to have differed in no way from the Mahapurushia creed, and subsequently its followers adopted the teachings of Deb Damodar. There is, in fact, practically no distinction between the Damodariyas, the Hari Deb Panthis, and the Gopal Deb Panthis, and the Vaishnavites of the Assam Valley can be divided into the Mahapurushia and Bamunia or 'other Vaishnavas,' as they have been called in the census tables. The former will accept a Sudra as a religious guide, worship no God but Krishna, and are uncompromising in their hostility to idols; the latter will only recognize Brahmans as their gosains, permit the adoration of other deities, such as Siva and Kali, in addition to that of Krishna, and allow sacrifices to be offered in their honour."

The Bamunias are also more liberal in their diet, and will eat goats, pigeons, and ducks, a form of food that is not allowed to orthodox Vaishnavites in Bengal. Madhab Deb, like most religious reformers, was a strict disciplinarian. The story goes that the breach between him and Gopal Deb arose one stormy day, when the party were returning to Barpeta by boat. Gopal Deb, anxious for the safety of his teacher, apostrophised the storm clouds passing overhead, and begged them to restrain their fury till Madhab had reached the shore in safety.

This innocent remark was construed into an invocation of Varuna, the god of rain. Gopal Deb was denounced as an idolater, and was incontinently, by order of Madhab, flung out of the boat. Such treatment was enough to damp the enthusiasm of the most ardent disciple. Gopal Deb, wallowing in the water, gallantly shouted out defiance to his former leader, and warned him that in future he would be treated with uncompromising opposition.

Sixty-three per cent of the Vaishnavites in Sibsagar were said to be members of the Mahapurushia sect. But it must not be understood from this that they are the adherents of the spiritual descendants of Sankar Deb, whose *namghor* is situated at Barpeta. Nearly all of them are followers of the Majuli gosains, and most of them should therefore have been classified as Bamunias.

The sattras of Sibsagar.

There are many *sattras** in Assam, but four stand out pre-eminent above all others, Auniati, Dakhinpat, Garamur, and Kuruabahi. The first three are situated on the Majuli, are under the control of Brahman gosains, and are as strictly celibate as the mediæval monasteries. But their founder most sensibly made provision for the perpetuation of a line of priests trained up amidst the holy influences of a religious institution, and directed that the inhabitants of the Kuruabahi *sattra*, which is situated in Nowgong, should be allowed to marry. The gosains of the other three *sattras* are thus either brought from Kuruabahi, or from "little *sattras*" in close proximity to the main institution, in which there are families of married Brahmans. The Auniati and Dakhinpat

* A *sattra* is a religious college which is in some respects not unlike a mediæval monastery.

sattras both possess large grants of land, which were originally made by the Ahom Rajas and confirmed by the British Government. The Garamur *sattra* is also said to have been well endowed, by Sib Singh, in whose reign it was founded; but, at the time when the Commissioner was enquiring into the validity of the claims put forward by the various religious institutions in Assam, the gosain was absent at Brindaban and took no personal interest in the matter. The title deeds had been lost in the troublous times of the Moamaria insurrection and the Burmese invasion, there was no one to represent the *sattra*, and its claims were never submitted for the consideration of Government. The result was that such grants of land as it may originally have possessed lapsed to the state, and it is only recently that 1,000 *bighas** of land were given to it as an act of grace.

Source of i come. The income of the gosains is, however, derived from other sources besides land. Every disciple is expected to make a small contribution in cash or kind each year to his spiritual leader. The demand is small enough, and does not generally exceed from four to eight annas in cash, with five seers of rice, and a handkerchief or other cloth woven at home, or a certain quantity of silk thread. This in itself is only a small tax upon the villager, but the aggregate of many such subscriptions serves to make the larger *sattras* extremely prosperous institutions.

In every village in which the gosain has any considerable number of disciples he appoints a local representa-

* 3·025 bighas are equivalent to one acre.

tive or *medhi*, * who either collects these contributions and conveys them to the *sattra*, or hands them over to a superior collecting officer termed *Raj medhi* In return he is exempted from personally making any payment. He also receives fees from the villagers for attending the funeral obsequies of any of his fellow disciples, and generally enjoys a position of some dignity.

The Garamur Sattra.

The following description of the *sattra* at Garamur gives a fair idea of the general appearance of the larger of these institutions. The building is approached by a good road, which has been constructed at some little expense by Nuniya coolies. They were paid from contributions received from the disciples of the gosain, as, even in the interests of so revered a man, the Assamese peasant will not consent to labour on the roads. The *namghor* itself is a huge structure, and, though the roof of corrugated iron seems somewhat out of place in such surroundings, within it is sufficiently spacious and gloomy to satisfy all the conventional requirements of a place of worship.

The roof is supported on huge wooden pillars, and the great floor space is almost entirely bare, save for one or two lecterns on which the sacred writings are reposing. The actual shrine is a separate building closely adjoining the eastern end of the *namghor*, and contains a single trinity of deities before whom offerings of fruit and grain are made. This shrine is very different from the *penetralia* of the Saktist temples. There are no traces of

* This official amongst the lower castes is often known as a *sajtola*.

blood or grease, there is nothing disgusting or grotesque, and the whole place is dominated by that note of decency and propriety which is so marked a characteristic of the Vaishnavism of the Majuli. The *namghor* is surrounded by gardens of flowers and fruit trees, and, in addition to plantains and graceful areca palms, there are various members of the citron family whose golden fruit shows bright against the dark green foliage. In a square around these gardens stand the lines (*hathi*) in which the *bhokots* (resident monks) live. They consist of well built rows of rooms, which are much more spacious than those ordinarily occupied by the Assamese and are kept scrupulously clean and neat. Nothing could exceed the courtesy of the welcome extended to any Government officer visiting the *sattra*. The smiling monks flock round him, chairs are placed in the portico of the *namghor*, and the gosain himself is summoned. On the arrival of the holy man his followers fall upon their knees, and the gosain and his visitor sit and converse in the midst of a circle of kneeling monks. There is something singularly gracious and pleasing in the whole atmosphere of the place. Everything is fresh, and neat, and well to do. The well groomed smiling monks are evidently at peace with themselves and with the world at large, and even the little boys who flock around them are unusally clean and well behaved. These children are recruited from the neighbouring villages and trained up to be *bhokots*, but, if at any time they find the restraints of celebacy irksome, they are at liberty to return to the outer world.

The surroundings of the Dakhinpat *sattra* are even more attractive than those of Garamur. On entering the lich-gate, which is an almost invariable feature in these institutions, the visitor finds himself in a huge quadrangle. In place of the lawns of the Oxford Colleges there are great tanks whose banks are overshadowed by huge umbrageous trees. Auniati, on the other hand, is a less imposing place, as the neighbourhood is much exposed to flood, and the *sattra* buildings are crowded together on the highest land available. **Dakhinpat and Auniati.**

Altogether there are no less than 188 *sattras* in Sibsagar, but very few of them possess any landed property, and nearly all are dependent on the contributions of their disciples. A list of these *sattras* will be found appended to this chapter. The following are the only *sattras* which hold any considerable grants of land. Auniati—revenue free 21,000 acres, half rates 600 acres; Dakhinpat—revenue free 10,400 acres; Kamalabari—revenue free 5,900 acres; Bengnaati—revenue free 2,500 acres. **188 Sattras in Sibsagar.**

The Auniati *sattra* is said to have been founded by Niranjan Deb, a disciple of Gopal Deb, who in his turn was a follower of Damodar Deb. Jaiyadwaj Singh became a disciple of the gosain in 1653 A. D., and endowed the *sattra* with large grants of land. The gosain of that day took up his residence on the Majuli, which at that time was not separated from Rangpur by the Brahmaputra, as the main channel of the river then flowed down the Kherkutia Suti. **Origin of Auniati and Dakhinpat.**

The Dakhinpat *sattra* was originally founded by Damodar Deb in the latter half of the sixteenth century in Kuch Bihar. He was succeeded by three gosains, Balodeb, Paramananda Deb, and Banamali Deb, who is said to have been endowed with more than human wisdom and sagacity. In 1653 A. D., during the incumbency of this priest, the *sattra* was moved from Kuch Bihar to a village in Sibsagar known as Majuli Rangoli Bahor. The gosain brought with him from Orissa an image of Vishnu, which is said to have been worshipped by Judhisthira, the hero of the Mahabharata. Like the gosain of Auniati, he was treated with much courtesy by Jaiyadwaj Singh, who endowed the *sattra* with large grants of land.

Muhammadans. In 1901, there were 24,878 Muhammadans in Sibsagar which was equivalent to 4 per cent of the total population. The great majority of these persons are Sunnis, and it is said that in places the Muhammadan villagers are still imbued with Hindu superstitions. *Mantras* are occasionally chanted in times of trouble, Ai is invoked when small-pox has appeared, and some even go the length of sacrificing fowls and pigeons. The Morias are a section of degraded Muhammadans who are said to be the descendants of prisoners who were captured when Turbuk was defeated and killed in 1532 A. D. They were employed in various capacities for which they showed themselves to be quite unfitted and were finally made braziers. They are said to be dirty and addicted to drink, and are regarded with contempt by their co-religionists. Outside the towns there are few masonry

mosques, and worship is usually conducted in a thatched hut which has nothing in its appearance to suggest that it is intended for a place of prayer. There are no propaganda for the dissemination of the faith, and Muhammadanism is said to make few if any converts. In Sibsagar the Darga or grave of Komaldya Khunkar Muhammad Gani, which is situated in Chokola village in the Banmukh mauza, is regarded as a place of peculiar sanctity, and is visited by pilgrims every year.

Animism.

Males	20,788
Females	18,415

Most men find considerable difficulty in giving a clear and intelligible account of the faith that is in them, and the simple aboriginal tribes are no exception to the general rule. Broadly speaking their religious beliefs seem to fall under the following heads. Unlike the German metaphysician, they have no uncomfortable doubts with regard to their own existence and the existence of the material world. To account for the production of these visible phenomena, they put forward various theories, which are hardly more improbable than the accounts of the creation given in most religious systems. The way in which the world came into existence is, after all, a matter of no very great importance, and the essential object of religion is to ensure a comfortable passage through life to its followers. No country or community is exempt from pain and trouble, and to the dwellers in the plains of India has been allotted a fairly liberal portion of the ills of life. When the cattle die, or small-pox or cholera visit the village, or other trouble comes, it is only natural to

suppose that somebody or something is the cause of these misfortunes. The simple tribesmen then endeavour to ascertain the particular spirit from whose displeasure they are suffering, and to appease him in whatever way they can.

From Table IV it will be seen that there are hardly any members of the animistic tribes in the Sibsagar subdivision, and most of those censused there were Kacharis from Lower Assam employed on tea gardens. The Mikir Hills are in fact the great centre of the animistic population, and, except for a few Miris, there are hardly any unconverted tribesmen in the Sibsagar plain.

Minor Religions. The religions which were not strongly represented in the district in 1901 were Buddhists (1,668); Jains (197); Brahmos (36); and Sikhs (17). The Buddhists are immigrants from the Shan States, who settled in Assam at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries and are locally known as Noras, Turungs, and Aitoneas.*

The Jains are the shrewd Marwari merchants to whom reference has been already made, and the Sikhs were men in the employ of the Assam-Bengal Railway Company.

Christians. Sibsagar contains more native Christians than any other district in the plains, with the exception of Goalpara and Lakhimpur. Of recent years they have been steadily increasing in numbers, as in 1881 there were only 462 native Christians; in 1891, 1,048; and in 1901, 2,113. There is a branch of the American Baptist Mission in

* For an account of these colonies see Chapter X of the Census Report for 1891.

Sibsagar town and more than half of the native Christians professed themselves to be members of this sect.

Agriculture is the staple occupation of the people, and **Occupation.** the proportion of agriculturists in 1901 (91 per cent) was unusually large, even for an agricultural country like Assam. The bulk of these persons were petty landholders who held direct from Government, but the number of garden coolies was also very large. Fishing was the only other industry which supported as much as one per cent of the population. In 1901, the occupations of the people were classified under 520 different heads, and details for the great majority of these heads will be found in Table XV, Part II, in the second part of the Census Report. These figures do not, however, lend themselves readily to review. The proportion of workers to the total population (63 per cent) is unusually high. This is due to the fact that the wives and daughters of the ordinary cultivator work in the fields, and to the large number of garden coolies whose children begin to work at a very early age.

The forms of marriage in vogue are the *hompura*, **Marriage customs.** or full Hindu rite, when the sacred fire is lighted and a priest is engaged to perform the ceremony, the *kharu moni pindha* or *juran*, in which a feast is given to the friends and relations and ornaments are given to the girl, the system under which the bridegroom, who is called a *caponiya*, enters the house of his prospective father-in-law, and works for his wife as Jacob worked for Rachel, and the *chaklong* rite amongst the Ahoms

which has already been described. Brahmans, Kayasthas, and well-to-do Kalitas invariably perform the *hompura* ceremony, which may cost anything from fifty to two hundred rupees or even more*. This expenditure is incurred on the purchase of ornaments and clothing, on the payment of priests, musicians, and palki bearers, on the hire of elephants and horses, and on a feast to the relations and friends, the principal ingredients of which are rice, molasses, curds, and betel-nut.

The practice of taking a bride price used to be common but is going out of fashion, and is no longer considered to be quite good form. This perhaps is just as well, as marriage under any circumstances entails an expenditure which is often considerably more than the bridegroom can afford. Assamese girls are generally not married till they are old enough to develop tastes and inclinations of their own, and personal feeling is occasionally opposed to mere prudential considerations. A girl may, perhaps, have been courted for some years. Each *bihu* her lover has brought loads of rice, plantains, curds, and even pieces of opium to her father, and then at the last moment she goes off with some one else. The aggrieved suitor naturally seeks to be reimbursed for his expenditure, and the father in his turn endeavours to extort the money from the favoured man. These elopements or abductions are especially common at the *bihu* time. To protect her reputation the girl

* A description of this ceremony as practised in Assam will be found on p. 63 of the Census Report for 1901.

usually pretends to be carried off by force, but the very scene of the elopement is pre-arranged, and her lamentations are not as genuine as they are hearty. Any one in fact who wishes to see real grief and indignation should stumble, as is occasionally done by chance, on an abduction that has failed, when disappointment renders the young lady utterly incapable of concealing her real feelings.

Amusements and festivals.

Feasts, singing parties, and *bhaonas* or simple theatrical performances are the principal amusements of the villagers. The *bhaonas* are often held in temporary sheds constructed by the roadside, and on a winter's morning the traveller who is early abroad frequently comes upon parties of revellers still lingering over the pleasures of the previous night. The *dol jatra* or festival in honour of Krishna in February or March, when the image of the god is swung to and fro and the people pelt one another with red powder in memory of his amorous exploits with the milkmaids of Brindaban, is not much in favour with the Assamese. Foreigners, on the other hand, whether still residing on tea gardens, or living in the villages, are great observers of the *fagua* as it is called. There is naturally a good deal of drinking, and garden managers always hope that the spring rains will break before this festival occurs, so that the risk of some drunken cooly accidentally firing the lines may be diminished. The *Janmastami* in honour of Krishna's birth in August or September, and the *Sivaratri* in memory of Siva in March, are kept

as fasts rather than feasts. The Durga Puja is observed by Saktists.

The Bihus. The special festivals of the Assamese are the three *bihus* and the *sradh* ceremonies of Sankar Deb and Madhab Deb, the founders of the Mahapurushia sect. The Kartik *bihu* is celebrated on the last day of Asvin (October 14th), and is not an occasion of very much importance. Hymns are sung in honour of God, and, in place of their usual meal of hot rice and curry, the people take cold food, such as curds, molasses, plantains and cold rice. The Magh *bihu* is the harvest home, and begins on the last day of Pous (January 14th). For weeks beforehand tall heaps of rice straw piled round a central pole are a prominent feature in the rural landscape. At the dawn of day the villagers bathe and warm their chilled bodies at these bonfires, a very necessary precaution as at this season of the year the mornings are always cold and generally foggy. The Magh *bihu* is to some extent a children's festival, and most of the jollification is confined to the smaller boys who sing and dance, and feast in small grass huts that have been constructed for the purpose. The Baisakh *bihu* which begins on the last day of Choet (April 14th) is in honour of the new year. The cattle are smeared with oil mixed with matikalai, turmeric, and rice, and are then taken to the nearest stream and bathed. The villagers go from house to house visiting their friends and relatives, and offer them presents of cloths and other things. Buffalo fights are organized in the rice fields

but these contests are rather tame affairs, and the animals very seldom injure one another. This *bihu* is an occasion of some license as boys and girls dance together in the fields and sing suggestive songs, and lapses from chastity between members of the same caste are considered almost venial. This is the season of the year when run-away matches are most common, and during the next few weeks the outraged but avaricious parent, complaining of the abduction of his daughter, is by no means an uncommon sight in the local courts. The *sradh* ceremony of Sankar Deb is celebrated in August-September, and that of Madhab three days before the *Janmastimi*. All work is laid aside on these two days and the people devote their time to feasting and the singing of *hymns*.

List of Temples.

Tahsil or mauza in which situated.	Name of temple.	Date of construction and name of founder.
Dergaon mauza ...	Na Dol (Neghereting temple).	Built by Rajeswar Singh in 1751 A. D.
Namtidol tahsil ...	Bagi Dol ...	Built by Lakshmi Singh's mother in 1769 A. D.
	Barpatra Dol ...	Built by Harinath Barpatra in 1727 A. D.
	Gaurisagar Dol *viz* Siva Dol, Devi ,,	Built by Rani Promotheswari, wife of Sib Singh, in 1727 A. D.

List of Temples—(concld.)

Tahsil or mauza in which situated.	Name of temple.	Date of construction and name of founder.
Sibsagar tahsil ...	Jaisagar Dol Majo Dol Debighar Bhogghar	Built by Rudra Singh.
	Namti Dol ...	Built by Namtial Borbarua.
	Natigosain Dol ...	Built by Natigosain.
	Rudrasagar Dol ...	Built by Lakshmi Singh in 1780 A. D.
	Barpatra Dol ...	Built by Kenduguria Barpatra.
	Gauri Ballav Dol ...	Built by Nagosain.
	Rungnath Dol Phagooah Dol Kharghar Poojagar	Built by Rudra Singh in 1704 A. D.
	Hara Gauri Debalaya	Built by Rudra Singh in 1704 A. D.
	Siva Dol (Isaneswar)	Built by Lakshmi Singh's mother in 1769 A. D.
Sibsagar town ...	Siva Dol Vishnu Dol Debi Dol	Built by Ambica, second queen of Sib Singh, in 1734 A. D.
Thaura Panidihing mauza.	Thaura Dol ...	Built by Dehingia Borbarua.

List of Sattras.

Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.	Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.
	SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION.	Gadhuli bazar...	Jorabari.
	Brahman Gosain.	Hachara ...	Khatpar.
Bakata ...	Chekaratali.	" ...	Moramora.
" ...	Michakuria.	Jakaichuk ...	Deopani Gazala.
Dopdar ...	Ratanpuria.	Joktali ...	Bareghar.
Kowarpur ...	Mahara.	" ...	Namati.
Nazira ...	Mahara.	" ...	Norabhari.
Salaguri ...	Bangajan.	" ...	Saukajan.
	Sudra Gosain.	Kowarpur ...	Checha.
Athkhel ...	Supaha.	" ...	Dhapalial.
Bakata ...	Fulbari.	" ...	Khatpar.
" ...	Gadapani.	" ...	Shalkushi.
" ...	Kathmohanta.	" ...	Supaha.
Betbari ...	Katanipar.	Mar bazar	Jakai.
" ...	Kayaimora.	" ...	Takawbari.
" ...	Kuamara.	Nazira ...	Auguria.
" ...	Kurekbona.	" ...	Budbari.
" ...	Shalkushi.	" ...	Duramari.
" ...	Sonari Charigaon.	Salaguri ...	Kabarpuria.
Dopdar ...	Chupaha.	" ...	Shalaguri.
" ...	Namati.	" ...	Thukarial.
" ...	Saru Bengena Ati.	Silakuti ...	Katani Namati.
Gadhuli bazar	Gazala Medhi.	" ...	Naham Bapu.

List of Sattras—(contd.)

Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.	Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.
	JORHAT SUBDIVISION		
	Brahman Gosain.		
Bahana ...	Adhar Sattra.	Salmara ...	Auniati.
" ...	Patiyari.	" ...	Bar Sakupora.
Baligaon ...	Barkotia.	" ...	Belusudhia.
" ...	Owa Sattra.	" ...	Botargoya.
Chaokhat ...	Adhar Sattra.	" ...	Dakhinpat.
" ...	Batorgoya.	" ...	Garamur.
" ...	Defalu.	" ...	Karatipar.
" ...	Ghuriagoya.	" ...	Katanigaon.
" ...	Patiyari.	" ...	Matia Baria Puniar Sattra.
" ...	Phulbari.	" ...	Puniar Bar Sattra.
" ...	Siyalmara.	" ...	Puniar Maju Sattra.
Holongapar ...	Punia.	" ...	Puniar Na Sattra.
Jorhat tahsil ...	Baliporia.	" ...	Puniar Saru Sattra.
" ...	Jalkuria.	" ...	Saru Sakupora.
" ...	Kaisungia.	Simaluguri ...	Ratnakar.
" ...	Misimi.	Teok ...	Mahara.
" ...	Nachanipar.	" ...	Nepali.
" ...	Ratanpuria.	" ...	Pohardia.
Parbatia ...	Bardhapkota.		
" ...	Sarudhapkota.		
Salmara ...	Adhar Sattra.		

List of Sattras—(contd.)

Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.	Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.
	JORHAT SUBDIVISION—(*contd.*)		
	Sudra Gosain.		
Amguri ...	Gazala.	Jorhat Tahsil ...	Kathsattra.
" ...	Kangsapara.	" ...	Koharporia.
" ...	Thokorial.	" ...	Komar Sattra.
Bahana ...	Letugaon.	" ...	Korekhona.
" ...	Madarguri.	" ...	Letagram.
" ...	Sawdkushi.	" ...	Letugram.
Baligaon ...	Leturgaon.	" ...	Modarguria.
Chaokhat ...	Bahjengoni.	" ...	Nachanipar.
" ...	Degholi.	" ...	Negoria.
" ...	Kangsapar.	" ...	Naharkotia.
" ...	Saringia.	" ...	Sessar Sattra.
" ...	Supaha.	" ...	Supaba.
Hezari ...	Bahbari.	" ...	Telpani.
" ...	Leturgoya.	Lahing ...	Dangdhora.
" ...	Srabani.	" ...	Kordaiguri.
Holongapar ...	Letugoya.	" ...	Thukubolia.
Jorhat Tahsil ...	Dholani.	Parbatia ...	Leturgaon.
" ...	Elengi.	" ...	Puranimati.
" ...	Gazala.	" ...	Silpotia.
" ...	Jurkota.	" ...	Srabani.

List of Sattras—(contd.)

Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.	Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.
	JORHAT SUBDIVISION—(*concld.*)		
	Sudra Gosain.		
Salmara ...	Bara Suk Saru Elengi.	Teok ...	Gazala.
" ...	Bengna Ati.	...	Koharpar.
" ...	Bhogpur.	" ...	Magurmora.
" ...	Bihimpuria.	" ...	Silkushi.
" ...	Degholi.	" ...	Supaha.
" ...	Dihing.	...	Ujania
" ...	Dikhomukhia Elengi.		GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION.
" ...	Kakarikota Bar Elengi.		*Brahman Gosain.*
" ...	Kamalabari.	Ahataguri ...	Adhar.
" ...	Kamjan Elengi.	" ...	Barhaipukhuri.
" ...	Matiabaria.	" ...	Beloguri.
" ...	Narasingha.	" ...	Nachanipar.
" ...	Porabheta Elengi.	" ...	Puranimati.
" ...	Samaguri Na Sattra.	" ...	Purtamia.
" ...	Samaguri Purani Sattra.	Dakhinhengra,	Na-gosain.
" ...	Supaha.	Dhekial ...	Mahara.
" ...	Ulutalia.	" ...	Gaurang.
Simaluguri ...	Gazala.	Gurjogania ...	Madhu Mishra.
" ...	Sessa Sattra.	Mankhoa ...	Adhar.
		Michamara ...	Adhar.

List of Sattras—(concld.)

Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.	Name of mauza in which situated.	Name of Sattra.
	GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—(*concld.*)		
	Brahman Gosain.		
Michamara ...	Chengaparia.	Athgaon ...	Oaguri.
" ...	Kandali.	" ...	Ulutali.
" ...	Mukalimuria.	Dakhinhengra	Jakai.
" ...	Namati.	" ...	Kharangial.
" ...	Pahumaria.	" ...	Telpani.
" ...	Puranimati.	Dhekial ...	Leturgoya.
" ...	Thukarial.	" ...	Madaraguri.
Namdayang ...	Kuruababi.	Ghiladhari ...	Alengi.
Bangamati ...	Mahara.	Gurjogania ...	Pukhuriparia.
	Sudra Gosain.	Marangi ...	Gazala.
Ahataguri ...	Bali Bapu Goyan.	Michamara ...	Bihimpur.
" ...	Chakata.	" ...	Hatkuchi.
" ...	Chapari.	" ...	Kathar.
" ...	Halodhiati.	" ...	Kothiatolia.
" ...	Madararguri.	Namdayang ...	Checha.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTS.

Crops grown—Rice—Mustard—Pulses—Fibres—Storage and threshing of grain—Agricultural implements—Sugarcane—Preparation of molasses—Causes affecting productiveness of land—Garden crops—Yield and value of crops—General remarks—Grazing—Livestock—Cattle disease—Protective embankments—Commencement of tea industry—The boom in the early sixties—Collapse in 1866—Expansion of the industry—Labour supply—Labour laws—Situation of tea gardens—Soil—Varieties of plant—System of cultivation—System of manufacture—Green tea—Outturn and prices—Forests—System of management—Situation of reserves and revenue they yield—List of important reserves.

Crops grown. The staple food crop of Sibsagar is rice, which in 1902-03 covered 63 per cent of the total cropped area of the district. Other important crops are tea (15 per cent), and orchard and garden crops (8 per cent). A large part of the area shown under the latter head is, however, occupied by the homestead, and it is doubtful whether as much as one half is actually under cultivation. Mustard occupied 4 per cent of the total cropped area, miscellaneous food grains, nearly all of which are different forms of pulse, 3 per cent, and sugarcane 1·5 per cent. Wheat barley, and gram, the food grains of Upper India, are grown in small patches by immigrants from those parts, but the total area under these three crops in 1902-03 was

only 50 acres. A small quantity of maize is also grown by foreigners. The general system of cultivation and the manner in which the staple crops are raised is described in the following paragraphs. The area under different crops will be found in Table VII.

Rice falls under three main heads—*sali*, *ahu*, and *bao*, **Rice. Sali.** the proportion of the total rice area normally occupied by each of these three classes being—*sali* 92 per cent, *ahu* 7 per cent, and *bao* 1 per cent. *Sali* dhan, or transplanted winter rice, is first sown in little beds or nurseries (*kothiatoli*) near the homestead. The land is broken up in April or May, is ploughed five or six times till the ground is reduced to a puddle, and is carefully manured with cowdung and sweepings. The proportion borne by the seedling beds to the area under transplanted rice varies from 4 to 10 per cent. This is due to the fact that in poor fields close transplanting, a span apart (*bigutiya*), is necessary. In ordinary good land the seedlings are usually a cubit apart (*hatiya*), while in exceptionally good soil they are sometimes placed the width of a fishing basket apart (*palohchabiya*). The seed, which has been selected from the largest ears of the previous year's crop, is steeped in water for two or three days, allowed to germinate, and then sown broadcast over the bed in May and June. It comes up a rich emerald green, and at the beginning of summer these patches of the brightest green herbage are a striking feature in the rural landscape. In the meanwhile the fields are being got ready for the reception of the seedlings. The

husbandman starts ploughing as soon as the soil is softened by the spring rain, and repeats the process from four to eight times, till he has reduced the land to a rich puddle of mud. After the third ploughing the field is harrowed, the little embankments, a few inches high, intended to retain the water, are repaired, and if the fields adjoin the road or the village site they are fenced in with split bamboo. When the seedlings are about seven or eight weeks old, they are taken from the nursery bed and carried in large bundles (*akhi*) to the field. Here they are planted out in handfuls (*muthi*), each of which contains four or five plants. It is usually the practice to steep the young plants in water for a day or two before they are planted out, and, unless they are weak and stunted, the tops are cut off at the time when they are removed from the nursery. Transplanting goes on from the beginning of July to the middle of September, and is generally carried out by women. The work is of a most arduous description, and involves stooping for hours in a field of liquid mud, under the rays of a burning tropical sun. In places where it is difficult to obtain labour to transport the seedlings the grain is sometimes steeped in water till it germinates and is then sown broadcast on the field. Before the end of the rains the crop is fully grown, though the ears are still empty, but about the beginning of October they begin to fill, and the field to turn to a rich yellow. From the middle of November to the middle of January harvesting is going on. Women grasp a handful of the ears and cut them off about eight inches below the head. These handfuls (*muthi*) are tied up with a

piece of straw and left in the field for a few days to dry. When the grain is ready to be transported to the granary, the *muthis* are made into larger sheaves. Six to eight *muthis* form a *thor* or *jhap*, and five or six *thors* a *dangari*. A *dangari* is then affixed to either end of a sharp pointed bamboo called *biriya*, and the load, which is called a *bhar* and carried across the shoulder, is taken to the homestead by the men.

The different kinds of *sali* dhan fall under two main divisions, *lahi* and *bar*. *Lahi* ripens earlier than *bar*, and, though the grain is of a finer quality, the yield is appreciably smaller. It is planted on the higher fields which dry up first at the conclusion of the rains, and which cannot therefore be cropped with the more productive *bar* dhan. Altogether there are said to be no less than 74 different varieties of *sali* dhan in the district.

Bao dhan.

Bao dhan is sown broadcast about the end of February, the field having been previously prepared by four or five ploughings. It is grown in flooded tracts, and the embankments made between the fields are smaller than in the case of *sali*, and are sometimes dispensed with altogether. It ripens about the beginning of December and is harvested in the same way as *sali*. The total area under *bao* is less than 2,000 acres and about half of this is grown in the Salmara mauza.

Ahu dhan.

Ahu dhan also is usually sown broadcast, and is grown under two different sets of conditions. The greater part of the *ahu* raised is sown on the *chaparis*, or

high-riparian flats which fringe the Brahmaputra. The usual procedure is as follows :—

In May, the jungle is cut down and sometimes burnt, and the land left till towards the end of the rains. If any jungle has sprung up in the interval it is cleared in the same way, the process being known as *gojala kata*, and ploughing begins in January. The field is ploughed three times and harrowed, and the clods are broken up by a mallet. Another ploughing and harrowing follow, the seed is sown, and the land again ploughed and harrowed, to ensure that the grain becomes thoroughly mixed with the soil. When the plants are about six inches high and catch the wind (*botah boloah*) they are harrowed again and weeded, and finally harvested about the middle of June. The crop is, however, a precarious one, and is liable to be destroyed by a sudden rise of the river. The plants can live under water for as much as a week, but if after this time the floods do not retire they are permanently destroyed. *Ahu* is often grown on the *chaparis* in conjunction with mustard, and no jungle cutting is of course required when the soil has been already cleared for the oil seed crop. The same field is seldom cropped for more than three years in succession. The weeds which were unable to find a lodging under the dense growth of *ikra* (*saccharum arundinaceum*), *khagari* (*saccharum spontaneum*), and *nal* (*phragmites roxburghii*), with which the land in its natural state is covered, soon spring up when once the reeds have been burned. After the third year it is less trouble to burn fresh jungle than to clean the old fields of weeds, and by a change of site

the peasant gets the further advantage of the manure of ashes and silt for his next year's crop.

Nearly three-fourths of the *ahu* crop is raised on the Majuli, and most of the remainder is grown on the *chaparis* south of the Brahmaputra in the Jorhat and Golaghat subdivisions, *i. e.*, in the Chaokhat, Charigaon, Hezari, Rangamati, Michamara, and Namdayang mauzas In the more densely settled portions of Jorhat the custom is gradually coming into vogue of taking a crop of *ahu* from land which is subsequently planted out with *sali*. This is, however, only done where the soil is fairly light, as a stiff and sticky clay is too hard to plough before the ground has been well moistened by the rain. *Ahu* is hardly grown at all in the Sibsagar subdivision.

Ras rice. A variety of transplanted rice called *ras* or *gethu* has been recently introduced into the district by Bengali coolies. It is grown near the homestead on the higher *rupit* lands, is transplanted and reaped rather earlier than *sali* and yields a particularly fine quality of grain. This rice has largely taken the place of transplanted *ahu*, of which there is very little in Sibsagar.

Mustard. Mustard, as has already been said, is usually grown in conjunction with *ahu* on the riparian flats. The jungle is cut down in February and March, and, if the land cannot be prepared in time for summer rice, is allowed to rot upon the ground. What remains is burned in October, the stumps are dug out, and the land is then ploughed over four or five times. The seed is sown about the beginning of November, and the plant is

ready to be pulled from the field about the middle of February. It is generally left to dry for a few days, and is then threshed either in the field in a place prepared for the purpose or near the homestead. Mustard is generally grown in conjunction with summer rice (*ahu*), and about two-thirds of the total district crop is raised in the Majuli. A certain quantity is also grown in the *chaparis* of Jorhat and Golaghat; Baligaon and Hezari being the principal mustard mauzas of the former subdivision and Michamara and Rangamati of the latter. Mustard is seldom grown in the *sadr* subdivision of the district.

Pulses. Pulse is usually grown on the alluvial flats that fringe the Brahmaputra, in conjunction with summer rice and mustard, but a crop is often taken from the land on which rice seedlings, early rice, and sugarcane have been grown, as it is generally and rightly thought to improve the quality of the soil. In the *chaparis* if new land is taken up the first proceeding is to cut and burn the reeds and grass. Only two ploughings are required, and those are of the very lightest character, and, if the ground is naturally clear of jungle, the seed is sometimes simply sown on the river flats as soon as the floods subside. Pulse is also scattered broadcast amongst the rice stubble, or between the *sali* plants, if the land is still soft, but this method is not generally in use. The seed is sown in September and the crop is ripe about four months later. The plants are pulled up by the roots, left for a few days in the field to dry, and are then collected at the convenience of the cultivator. The seeds are threshed out by cattle, but, as the grains do not

separate readily from the pods, their efforts are supplemented by a man with a flail. Several different kinds of pulse are grown, but nine-tenths of the crop belong to the variety known as *mati-mah* (*phaseolus mungo radiatus*). Other kinds are *magu-mah* (*phaseolus mungo Linn:*), a species which has a smaller yield and requires more careful cultivation but commands a higher price and possesses a more delicate flavour. It is seldom grown except on the river *chaparis*. *Kala-mah* (*lathyrus sativus*) is grown but not in any considerable quantities. It has a large yield but does not fetch a high price. Another variety is the lentil *masur-mah* (*lens esculenta*) which is grown in the Majuli.

Jute is grown in small patches as a garden crop. The **Fibres.** seeds are generally sown in April, and the plants are cut in August and September, stripped of their leaves, tied in bundles, and left to rot in pools of water for from seven to twelve days. When they are ready a handful of stems is taken up, broken in the middle, and beaten to and fro in the water, till the inner part drops out and only the fibre remains. The bundles of fibre are then dried and are ready for use. Small patches of rhea (*bœhmeria nivea*) are grown in the gardens of the fishing castes, where it is heavily manured. The skin is stripped off from the stem and the fibre separated from the outer covering. The thread obtained is exceptionally strong and durable, but the difficulty of decortication has hitherto prevented the growth of rhea on a commercial scale.

Storage and threshing of grain.

The grain is usually stored as it is brought from the field in an outhouse called *bhoral,* which, unlike the houses of the villagers, is raised on posts well above the level of the ground. When it is required for use the sheaves are untied and spread over the courtyard. Cattle are then driven round and round over the heap of grain and straw till the ears have been finally separated from the stalk.* The grain is next passed through a sieve, and placed in a flat bamboo tray called *kula.* It is then jerked into the air and allowed to fall back into the tray, or held aloft and allowed to fall slowly to the ground, till gradually the chaff is carried off. After threshing the paddy is stored in huge drums called *mer.* They are made of split bamboo, and the outer surface is plastered over with clay and cowdung.

Agriculur al implements. The plough.

The agricultural implements in use are of a very simple character. The plough is usually made of the jack fruit tree or some other hard wood, and consists of three parts—the handle and body which are usually all in one piece, the pole which joins the plough at the junction of the handle and the body, and the yoke which is merely a piece of wood, fastened by rope at right angles to the pole, with pegs affixed to it to keep it from sliding from the necks of the bullocks. The front portion of the body is sharpened to a point which is shod with iron, and in soft soil a piece of bamboo is sometimes substituted for the iron. This piece of iron is the only portion of the plough which the farmer has to purchase. The rest he

* An experiment made by Mr. Darrah, Director, Department of Land Records and Agriculture, showed that nine bullocks took 2 hours and 8 minutes to thresh out 7½ maunds of paddy.

makes for himself. The whole instrument is suited to the wretched class of animal required to draw it. It weighs as a rule about 20 lbs., and the yoke seldom stands as much as 36 inches from the ground. It is obvious that such an implement can only penetrate from three to four inches into the soil, but the wretched quality of the plough cattle prohibits the use of a more effective instrument.

Other implements.

The harrow (*moi*) is generally a bamboo ladder, about eight feet in length, on which a man stands as it is drawn across the field. It is used to crush the clods turned up by the plough before mustard or summer rice is sown, and to reduce the fields required for wet rice to puddle. Its place is sometimes taken by a plain log of wood. It is prepared by the cultivator himself from the bamboos growing in his garden. Clods are broken by the mallet (*doli mari*) which is also made at home. Hoes (*kodalis*) are used to trim the embankments (*alis*) which help to retain the water. The head is bought in the bazar and costs from Re. 1 to Re. 1-4, and is fitted with a shaft by the farmer himself. Sickles (*kachi*), with which the rice is reaped, have also to be purchased, and cost from two to four annas. In *ahu* cultivation a large wooden rake (*bindha*), with teeth nearly one foot in length, is dragged over the crop by a bullock when the plants are about six inches high. The *nirani*, a kind of trowel with a long handle, is used for weeding *ahu* rice. The sugarcane mill is described in the paragraph dealing with the preparation of molasses. The ordinary implement used for husking grain is the *dheki*, a long beam with a pestle affixed at

the end, which is supported by two posts at about two-thirds of the length from the head. The shorter end is depressed by the foot, and the pestle is thus raised into the air ; the weight is then removed, and the pestle falls into a small mortar buried in the ground in which the grain is placed. The *dheki* is the implement ordinarily employed by the Assamese to husk their rice or pulse, but the animistic tribes generally use a large wooden mortar (*ural*) and a pestle (*mari*). All of these implements are made at home.

Sugarcane. Sugarcane (*saccharum officinarum*) is usually grown on high land near the village site, and, as the soil is poor, it has to be well manured with cowdung. The crop is propagated from the tops of the best canes which are cut off at harvest time and kept in a shady place. One of these tops yields on the average about five canes, and, as they contain but little juice, the cultivator does not sacrifice much of the gross product of his fields in the cause of reproduction. Four principal varieties of the plant are recognized. The *mag* or white stands about seven feet high and has yellow canes of a soft juicy texture. The *teli* is shorter, harder, and thinner, and the canes are of a deep red or even purple colour. There are two varieties of *pura*, the purple or indigenous, and the white or Bengali. The latter is the larger and the more juicy of the two but yields a smaller proportion of sugar. The *megela* is a hard and thin variety degenerated from the *mag* and is seldom cultivated. The land is hoed up till it is reduced to a fine tilth and the tops planted in trenches between April and June. The patch

is fenced with split bamboo, and there is usually a stout hedge of arhar dal (*cajanus indicus*), but constant watching is required to scare away jackals and other animals, and an empty oil tin with a clapper is generally to be seen suspended over each field. While the crop is growing it is continually hoed and weeded, and about August the leaves should be tied up round each cluster of canes, though this troublesome precaution is occasionally neglected. The earth from the ridges is heaped about the roots to strengthen their hold upon the soil, and this process is continued until the relative positions of ridge and trench are reversed, and the canes stand upon ridges with the trenches in between. Harvesting goes on from January to April, and during the winter nights and in the foggy mornings the drone of the sugarcane mill is heard coming across the fields in nearly every part of the district where the "works of men" are to be seen.

The area under sugarcane in Sibsagar in 1902-03 was over 8,000 acres, which was nearly double the area returned from any other district in Assam Proper. It is grown in small patches in every part of the district, but the principal centre of the industry is the country lying on either side of the Golaghat-Neghereting road, which is included in the Maukhoa, Dhekial, Michamara, Naharani, and Gurjogania mauzas. The Panidihing mauza and the Jorhat tahsil are the only two revenue units in the Sibsagar and Jorhat subdivisions in which much cane is raised, as in the mauzas south of the Dhodar Ali the plant has been attacked by a malignant fungus.

Preparation of molasses. The native form of mill is still generally used for the extraction of the juice from sugarcane. It consists of two wooden rollers fixed side by side in a trough hollowed out of a heavy block of wood. The tops of the two rollers pass through a hollow beam supported by uprights let through the lower block of wood into the ground, and are cut into the form of screws which fit into one another. To the larger of the two (*mota bhim* as distinguished from *maiki bhim*) is affixed a pole, which is driven round in a circle, and thus causes the rollers to revolve. The motive power is usually supplied by the villagers themselves, but buffaloes are occasionally used for the work. The mill requires rather more knowledge of carpentry for its production than the other implements of agriculture, and can only be made by the more skilful of the villagers. The cane is placed between the rollers and crushed as it is slowly forced through. Each handful is passed through the mill three or four times, till nothing but foam appears. The juice trickles from the trough into an earthen vessel and is then transferred to a small boat scooped out of a log. When twelve or fifteen gallons have been collected boiling begins. The furnace is hollowed out of the ground and has four circular openings to receive the cauldrons, which are made of the most durable kinds of potter's clay. Two of these vessels are placed about nine feet from the furnace mouth, and only serve to heat the juice before it is transferred into the other vessels to be boiled. When the juice has been reduced to the proper condition, it is ladled into a wooden vessel (*gholani*) shaped like a small dug out, and

is stirred for half an hour. As the stirring continues, the liquid loses its dark brown colour and assumes the consistency and hue of yellow mud. It is then stored in earthen pots and the process is complete.

Causes affecting productiveness of land.

The fertility of the rice fields mainly depends upon the following five causes, the water supply, the quality of the soil, and the liability to injury from flood, wild animals, or shade. The first-named factor is probably of most importance. The soil of the district varies from pure sand near the Brahmaputra to clay so stiff as to be utterly unfit for cultivation. The land best suited for the growth of rice is a clay loam *alatia*, the most fertile variety of which is called *bherbheria* and is particularly deep and soft. *Bherbheria* land is found at the lowest part of the rice basins and when enriched by the drainage from the village site is generally known as *charanpara*. The animals which do most injury to the crop are pigs, elephants, and monkeys. Elephants leave disastrous traces of their presence, but luckily do not remain long in any one locality, and are generally only found in the country lying at the foot of the Naga Hills. Serious damage is sometimes done by insects which are called *keonkata*, *tupalia*, *gandhi* (*leptocorisa acuta*) and *charaha* (*hispa acuesceus*). The *gandhi* is a small bug which injures the rice plant by feeding on the stems and sucking all the sap from the young grains. It is most prevalent in July and August and is particularly in evidence during a spell of hot dry weather. High wind and rain drive it back into the jungle, and good results are obtained by lighting fires of vegetable refuse to windward. The

best remedy of all is to collect the insects by smearing a winnowing fan with some glutinous substance and brushing it over the ears of grain, when many of the bugs will be found adhering to the fan. This remedy should be tried in the morning or late afternoon, as the insects do not feed in the heat of the day. The *charaha* is a tiny beetle, which eats away the outer surface of the leaves and stalks, and thus affects the outturn of the crops. It attacks the young plants in the nursery and can most easily be destroyed there by spraying.* Smoking the fields also produces good results, but must be continued for some days or the beetles will return. Rain is wanted when *sali* rice is sown and is transplanted, but is not needed for the sowing of *ahu* and *bao*. During every stage of its growth the plant is benefited by moderate showers, but rain is absolutely essential at the time when the ears are first appearing. Emphasis is laid on this necessity in the local proverb *tini haone pan ek ahine dhan*, which means that a pan vine that lasts for three years, and dhan which gets rain in Asvin (September 15th to October 15th) are both very profitable things. Hail storms in December sometimes lay the crop and add materially to the cost of reaping, but fortunately are very local in their action.

Garden crops. The plantain.

One of the most valuable of garden crops is the plantain (*musa sapientum*). As many as ten main varieties of this tree are recognized, but the most important are those known as *athia*, *monohar*, *chenichampa*, and

* The best solution is 1 lb. Paris Green, 1 lb. freshly slaked lime or flour and 150 gallons water. The solution should be kept constantly stirred and should be sprayed on with a fine sprayer.

malbhog. The first two groups are again subdivided into a considerable number of different species. The commonest form of *athia* is called *bhim*, a large tree which is found growing in the garden of nearly every house. The fruit is considered cool and wholesome, and is very generally used as food for infants. The *monohar* is a somewhat smaller tree, the pulp of the fruit is white and slightly acid in taste, and is largely used in combination with soft rice and milk at village feasts. The *malbhog* and *chenichampa* are small trees, whose fruit is much appreciated by Europeans. The *athia* plantain is generally grown near the homestead, where it can obtain a plentiful supply of manure ; but the finer varieties are planted at a little distance to protect them from the earthworms, whose attacks they are hardly strong enough to resist. Sandy soil and heavy clay check the growth of the plant, and anything in the shape of waterlogging is most injurious. The trees are planted in holes about a foot wide and eighteen inches deep and are manured with cowdung, ashes, and sweepings. Young saplings take from 18 months to two years to flower, and the flowers take from three to six months to turn to fruit. The plantain tree plays many parts in addition to that of fruit purveyor. The flower is much esteemed as a vegetable, the leaves serve as plates, and the trunks are used for decorative purposes on occasions of ceremony, and as food for elephants. An alkaline solution, distilled from the sheaths and the corm, is sometimes used in place of salt. These portions of the tree are sliced, dried, and reduced to ashes. The ashes are placed in an

earthen pot, in which there are several holes lightly plugged with straw. Water is then poured over them, which dissolves the alkali and trickles through the holes into the receiver below. The resulting product, which is known as *kharpani*, is used as a spice, as a hair-wash, and as a mordant with certain dyes.

Other garden crops. The betel-nut (*areoa catechu*) is grown almost as universally as the plantain, and with the bamboo, forms the great trinity of trees in which the houses of the Assamese are usually embedded. The plantation is hoed up, and kept clear of weeds, and the trees are most liberally manured with cowdung. The pan vine (*piper betle*) is frequently trained up their stems, and the leaf and nut, which are invariably eaten in conjunction, are thus grown side by side. Tobacco is a plant which is to be seen growing in the majority of gardens. The seedlings are raised in carefully manured beds in August and September. At the beginning of November they are transplanted into ground which has been reduced to a fine tilth, watered for a few days, and protected from the sun by little sections of the plantain trunk. The bed is lightly hoed up two or three times, and not more than ten or twelve leaves are allowed to grow on each plant, the remainder being picked off as they appear. The leaves are first gathered in February and March, and there is a second but much inferior crop about two months later. If required for chewing, they are either dried under a shed, or else pressed into a hollow bamboo (*chunga*) and allowed to ferment. When the tobacco is destined for the pipe, though this is not the use to which it is generally put, the

leaves are piled up in heaps till they ferment, cut up and mixed with molasses, and then are ready for the hookah. The commonest forms of vegetable grown are spinach, *puroi* (*basella alba*), *lai*, a species of *brassica*, different kinds of arums (*kachu*), different kinds of yams (*discorea*), and gourds, the country bean *urahi* (*dolichos lablab*), the common mallow *lafa* (*malva verticillata*), the radish *mula* (*raphanus sativus*), the sorrel *chuka sag* (*rumex vesicarius*), and the brinjal (*solanum melongena*). Potatoes are grown in the Majuli and in a few villages near the south bank of the Brahmaputra.

Yield and value of crops. The outturn of different crops varies according to the character of the season, and also to a great extent according to the character and level of the soil on which they are grown. The statement in the margin shows the normal yield per acre laid down by the Agricultural Department after a long series of experiments. These figures only represent a general mean and even in a normal year there are many fields whose outturn varies largely from the average. The yield of rice, it may be premised, is expressed in terms of husked grain. The prices obtained by the raiyats vary very materially in different parts of the district, and it is impossible to lay down any general average.

	lbs.
Sali ...	... 800
Ahu	... 750
Mustard	... 550
Molasses	... 2,200

General Remarks. Manure in not generally used except for garden crops and sugarcane, though, here and there, a raiyat is found with sufficient intelligence and industry to spread some cowdung on his rice fields. There is little tendency to

introduce new crops or to improve upon old methods, but the cultivation of potatoes is said to be slowly spreading, especially in the Michamara mauza, and in central Golaghat a little jute is grown. No efforts are made to improve the character of the crop beyond selecting the best grain for seed. Even this common sense precaution is occasionally mixed up with superstition, and seed is chosen because the plant from which it was taken was planted or reaped when the moon was on the wane.

Grazing. Cattle are generally grazed on the high land between the rice fields, in swamps and marshes, where excellent pasture is to be obtained during the cold season, and on the stubble that remains after the crop is cut. In the district as a whole there is no doubt abundant grazing of a kind, but it is not always well distributed, and in places the villagers during the rains are hard pressed for fodder. The finest grazing is to be found on the Majuli and in the marshes which fringe the Brahmaputra, and it is here that the professional herdsmen keep their buffaloes. Certain areas have been reserved as grazing grounds by executive order, but rules for their reservation have not yet been framed; though in the more densely-settled portions of the district it would seem that they would not be entirely out of place. In these tracts, during the rains, cattle have sometimes to be sent to other villages to graze, or are stall fed on rice straw which has been previously collected for the purpose.

The buffaloes of Sibsagar belong to three main breeds, **Buffaloes.** the Assamese, the Nepalese, and the Bengali. The Assamese is the finest and largest of the three, and, in the more jungly parts of the district, the excellence of the breed is to some extent maintained by an infusion of wild blood, wild bulls associating with the herd and becoming the sires of many of the calves. The Nepalese buffaloes have shorter horns than the Assamese, and the Bengali is altogether a smaller and less imposing animal. An Assamese bull buffalo usually costs from Rs. 40 to Rs. 60, while a cow is from 10 to 15 rupees more. Bengali buffaloes of either sex are considerably cheaper than the Assamese. Pure bred Assamese buffaloes are unfortunately becoming scarce, and crosses between the three breeds are extremely common.

Buffaloes rarely get anything but grass and a little salt to eat. In the cultivated portions of the district they are usually placed in charge of a small half-naked boy, whose legs can hardly stretch across the massive back of the animal he bestrides, and who guides it with a nose rope. In the *chaparis*, the herd is driven out to graze in the jungle and follows the lead of the older cows, whose whereabouts is indicated by the metal or wooden bells that are dangling from their necks. The *mo-khutis*, as these grazing camps are called, are to be found in the jungle covered *chaparis* on either side of the Brahmaputra, and are especially numerous on the Majuli, where there are between sixty and seventy of them, and in the Thaura Panidihing mauza in the

extreme east of the district. They are usually kept by Nepalese who make a livelihood by selling milk and *ghi*. A cow is said to remain in milk for about ten months, and yields at the beginning from two to four seers every day. The amount gradually decreases till a month or so before the next calf comes, when it ceases altogether. The milk is very white and rich in fatty material, and consequently yields a large proportion of *ghi*. The cows are said to begin breeding when three years old, and to continue doing so for fifteen years, during which time they give birth on the average to about ten calves. The normal life of a buffalo is from 25 to 30 years. Age is judged by the incisor teeth.

Cattle.

Half-starved, under-sized, ill-bred, and not unfrequently diseased, the Assamese cattle are but sorry creatures. The bullocks find it a difficult task to drag even the light native plough, and the cows yield but a minimum of milk. The causes of this degeneracy are not entirely clear, but are probably to be found in a total indifference to laws of breeding, in absolute neglect, and partly perhaps in the want of suitable fodder in the rains. Grazing is not very plentiful in Sibsagar, the demand for cattle is considerable, and the price is higher than in Lower Assam. Cows generally cost from Rs.10 to Rs. 18 or even more, and bullocks fetch as a rule between Rs. 20 and Rs. 30.

Goats and sheep and ponies'

The goats are almost as degenerate as the cattle. They yield but little milk, the whole of which is taken by the kids, and are only kept for food or sacrifice. At

night they are usually shut up in a small out-house with a raised floor, which is approached by a slanting board or sloping bamboo platform as a protection against jackals. There is no indigenous breed of sheep, the animals imported do not thrive, and the total number in the district is but small. The country ponies are, if anything, even more miserable specimens than the cattle. Few of them are as much as twelve hands in height, and they possess neither pace, endurance, or stamina. European residents are compelled to obtain their horses fresh from Calcutta. A census of live stock was taken in 1904 and disclosed the following results: Bulls and bullocks 132,000, cows 101,000, bull-buffaloes 25,000 cow-buffaloes 23,000, young stock 164,000, sheep 1,000, and goats 72,000.

Cattle disease.

The most common forms of cattle disease are foot and mouth disease (*chapka*), rinderpest (*guti*), a disease called *kachua*, the principal symptoms of which are flatulence and diarrhœa (*marki*), cholera, *matikhoa*, the first symptom of which is, as the name implies, the eating of earth followed by dysentery, and *sukuna* when the animal refuses to eat and dies after ten days or a fortnight. A veterinary surgeon, whose headquarters are at Mariani, is entertained by the district Local Boards.

Flood protection: work carried out by Ahoms and by British prior to 1901.

In every district in the Assam Valley there are extensive tracts which are exposed to the floods of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries, but nowhere has the subject of flood protection been a matter of such vital interest as in the *sadr* subdivision of Sibsagar. This is partly due to the fact that the population of the district is beginning to press upon the soil, partly to the fact that

the unlimited supply of labour at the disposal of the Ahom Rajas enabled them to protect the farms of the people living in the vicinity of the capital. The floods come not only from the Brahmaputra itself, but from the Dihing, Disang, Dikho and their tributaries. A very complete system of embankments was constructed in the days of native rule. The Dihing, the Dikho, the Disang, and the Dimau and Dirai, two smaller streams which fall into the Disang, were all protected, and there was a large bund along the south bank of the Brahmaputra. For a short time after our assumption of the administration of Assam these bunds were maintained by the District Officer, but, with the disappearance of the system of enforced labour, it was found impossible to keep them in repair. In 1888, the Deputy Commissioner called attention to the damage wrought by flood, and work was begun on the Dihing, Disang, Dikho, and Darika bunds and on the Dhai Ali. The total expenditure on the construction and maintenance of these embankments up to September 1901 was Rs. 1,27,000.

Work done since 1902. In 1902, the whole question came once more under the consideration of the Administration, and a committee was appointed, who were directed to enquire into the matter and to prepare a scheme for the approval of the Chief Commissioner. Work was begun in 1903-04, and the following was the condition of affairs at the end of 1904. The total expenditure on these works up to the end of December 1904 was about Rs. 3,07,000.

Dikho River.—A bund 15¼ miles in length with a top width varying from 12 to 6 feet, had been constructed

along the right bank from the point where the Assam-Bengal Railway crosses the Ramani Ali to the Tax Ali. On the left bank a bund 10 miles long had been constructed from a point about three-quarters of a mile above the place where the railway crosses the river. During the rains of 1904, the Dikho over-topped its banks and more than a quarter of a lakh of rupees was spent during the following cold weather in strengthening the bunds.

Dihing river.—A bund 6 feet wide at the top had been constructed for a length of 44 miles along the left bank to the Shalaguri Ali. The greater part of this embankment lies, however, in the district of Lakhimpur.

Disang river.—A bund 19 miles long, with a top width of from 4 to 6 feet, had been constructed along the left bank of the river from the Shalaguri Ali.

Gosaingaon Suti and Kakila river.—A bund had been constructed along the left bank from Gosaingaon, 5 miles down stream, to Naihatiagaon, and 7 miles up stream to meet the Ladoigarh.

Bhogdoi.—There are bunds on either side of the river which start from about one mile above the point where it is crossed by the trunk road, and terminate about two miles below it.

Commencement of tea industry.

Reference must now be made to the tea industry which has done so much for the development of Sibsagar.*

* Information with regard to the early history of the tea industry has been derived from—

(1) Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal No. XXXVII. Papers relating to tea cultivation in Assam. Calcutta, 1861.

(2) Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the state and prospects of Tea Cultivation in Assam, Cachar and Sylhet. Calcutta, 1868.

(3) Papers regarding Tea Industry in Bengal. Calcutta, 1873.

The indigenous tea of Assam was first brought to the notice of Government in 1826 by Mr. C. A. Bruce, a gentleman who had been engaged in trade in the Province while it was still under native rule, and who had been sent up the Brahmaputra in command of a division of gun boats in 1824. In 1834, a committee was appointed by Government to enquire into the possibility of cultivating tea on a commercial scale, who deputed three of their members, Doctors Wallich, McClelland, and Griffiths, to visit Upper Assam Nurseries were established, a small establishment was entertained under the general management of Mr. Bruce to search the jungles for plots of indigenous tea and cultivate them when discovered, and plants and seed were brought to Assam from China. Tea-makers and trained Chinese were imported in 1837, and in the following year some of the manufactured product was sent to England and met with a most favourable reception. Assam tea was regarded as a curiosity, and the first eight chests which were put up to auction fetched sums which at the present day seem little short of fabulous, the prices paid ranging from 16 *s.* to £ 1-14-0 a pound. These were, however, only fancy prices, and a short time afterwards a merchant offered to purchase tea in considerable quantities at prices ranging from 1-10½ *d.* to 2*s.* a lb.

First beginning in Sibsagar;

The first plantation in Sibsagar was situated near Jaipur, and, in 1840, was transferred by Government to the Assam Company. Too much stress was at that time laid on the necessity of cultivating the plant in the

localities in which it was found growing wild in the forests, establishments were maintained on a too lavish scale, and in 1847 shares in the Assam Company, on which £ 20 had been paid up, are said to have been sold for half a crown apiece. Economies were, however, effected in the management, and by 1852 the affairs of the Company had been placed on a more satisfactory footing. In 1859, they had nearly 3,400 acres under cultivation in the district which yielded about 700,000 lbs. of tea, the largest garden being situated at Lingri Pukhuri, which is now amalgamated with Mezenga.

The only other gardens in which at that time any tea was manufactured were Cinnamara, which was owned by Mr. Williamson, Nakachari owned by Mr. Todd, and Neghereting owned by Mr. Spears.*

The two former had been opened in 1854, and the latter in 1853. Twelve other plantations had been opened, but had not yet begun to yield an outturn. Of these four, Bengnakhoa, Oating, Ghiladhari, and Singlo, were owned by Mr. Williamson, while Holongapar and Debrapar were the property of Mr. Todd.†

The total area under cultivation in the district, which at that time was bounded on the west by the Dhansiri, was 5,227 acres with an outturn of 846,000 lbs. of tea.

* It must be borne in mind that at this time a portion of the present Golaghat subdivision was included in Nowgong.

Numaligarh which passed into the hands of the Jorhat Tea Company about this time yielded 48,000 lbs. of tea in 1859, and there was a small outturn obtained from Punkah.

† The expression used in the return is 'planter', but this apparently connotes ownership.

The boom in the early Sixties.

1859 to 1863 was a period of steady but not abnormal or unwholesome expansion. In the latter year the possibility of making large fortunes out of tea attracted the attention of the speculating classes; and tea planting passed through a severe crisis, which was entirely due to the action of Company promoters, who endeavoured to make money, not by manufacturing tea, but by hastily opening gardens to be sold at most exorbitant prices to the credulous investor. The promulgation of the fee simple rules of 1861, was followed by a rush for land, which was aggravated by the orders of the Board of Revenue, who authorised District Officers to sell estates on a pen and ink sketch made by the applicant, before they had been properly surveyed and demarcated. Land thus obtained was hastily cleared of jungle, a few plants, the majority of which soon died, were hurriedly put out, and the place was sold to the unsuspecting public as a flourishing tea garden. To such a pitch was this procedure carried that there is one case on record in which a manager received instructions from London to clear and plant a certain area of waste land for delivery to a Company to whom it had been already sold as a tea plantation.

Heavy mortality in the Sixties.

In spite of the high prices offered, local labour was not obtainable in sufficient quantities, and coolies, generally of the most miserable description, were sent up from Calcutta. The mortality in the depôts and on the journey was appalling. In the four years 1864 to 1867, the annual mortality in the largest depôt ranged from 36 to 115 per cent. of the average daily strength; the latter enormous

rate being calculated on a daily average of no less than 458 souls.* Between 1863 and 1868, 54,352 coolies were imported to Assam, 1,712 of whom died *en route*, which is equivalent to a death rate of about 40 per cent. per annum as the journey occupied on the average less than a month. Even when the garden was reached, the mortality was generally high, and was sometimes quite appalling. In the Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the state and prospects of tea cultivation, details are given for seven gardens in Upper Assam, on which the recorded mortality for half the year only in 1865 ranged from 16 to 39 per cent. The returns submitted were declared by the Commissioners to be unsatisfactory, but in 1866, 4,366 deaths were recorded in Upper Assam, which was equivalent to a death rate of 180 per mille on the total number remaining plus the total number of deaths. These days of high mortality have happily now passed away, and in 1902-03, the mortality amongst adult coolies in Sibsagar was only 26 per mille.

Collapse in 1866.

During the tea boom large sums were paid for labour and for seed, land which was little better than jungle was sold for preposterous prices, and the tea companies which were formed under these unfavourable conditions soon collapsed. 1866,1867, and 1868 were years of great depression. Mr. A. C. Campbell, in a note written in 1873, describes how young men who had been engaged in England, were turned adrift when the collapse came "in a most inhospitable country without a penny or a friend ; some died, others had literally to beg their way

* Report of the Commissioners, p. 28.

out of Assam, most had to regret impaired constitutions, and all the loss of some of the best years of their life." In 1869, affairs began to take a more favourable turn. It was seen that properly managed gardens could be worked at a satisfactory profit and that the estates of the bubble companies which had been bought for small prices after the great crash were doing well in the hands of their new owners. Since 1870, there has been an enormous expansion of the industry, and while the area under cultivation and the outturn have alike increased, the cost of production and the price obtained have steadily diminished. Like other industries, tea has experienced periods of prosperity and depression, but there has been no such boom with its inevitable collapse as occurred in the early sixties.

Expansion of the industry. In 1872, there were 11,290 acres under mature plant which yielded 3,200,000 lbs. of tea. The corresponding figures ten years later were 35,219 acres of plant and 11,337,000 lbs. of tea. By 1891 the outturn had risen to 20,465,000 lbs. and it continued to increase fairly steadily till in 1900 it was as much as 29,017,000 lbs. The industry was at that time suffering from the effects of over production, recourse was had to a system of finer plucking and the following year saw a decrease in the production of over 2,000,000 lbs. Statistics for later years will be found in Table VII.

Labour supply. There is hardly any local labour available for employment on the plantations, and coolies have to be brought from the other parts of India. In the ten years ending with 1890 the number so imported was 76,041

and in the following decade it rose to 121,593. The largest number imported in any year was in 1897, when 21,725 persons were brought up to the district.

The abstract in the margin shows the areas from which the labour force in 1901 had been recruited. A considerable proportion of those born in Assam are the children of immigrant coolies.

	Number.	Percentage.
Total ...	147,532	
Assam ...	38,526	26
Chota Nagpur ...	57,728	39
Other parts of Bengal.	26,582	18
United Provinces,	2,038	1
Central Provinces,	16,186	11
Madras ...	3,730	3

Labour laws.

The journey from the recruiting districts is troublesome and expensive, the class of persons capable of working successfully in the damp climate of Assam is limited, and of recent years the supply of labour available has not been sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the planters. Special Acts have been passed to regulate the relations between the employers and their labour force. Careful provision is made for the welfare of the coolie. He is housed in neat and comfortable lines, usually far superior to the dwellings occupied by persons of that class outside the gardens, he is provided with an excellent water supply, generally drawn from masonry wells and tanks, and when sick, he is cared for in a comfortable hospital by a native doctor working under the supervision of a European medical man. The provision of all these comforts and the importation of the labourers themselves cost large sums of money, which no one would be willing to expend without some guarantee that the coolies, when imported,

would consent to remain on the plantation. This protection is afforded by the law (Act VI of 1901) which lays down that a labourer, provided that he is well-treated, must not leave the garden to which he is indentured before the expiry of his contract, unless he chooses to redeem it by a money payment. Act XIII of 1859 is also freely used. Under this Act a labourer who has taken an advance on the understanding that he will complete a piece of work, is liable to imprisonment if he fails to fulfil his contract after he has been ordered to do so by a Magistrate.

Situation of tea gardens. The tea gardens are scattered all over the central and southern portions of the district. Only a few lie west of the river Dhansiri, and there are none north of the Brahmaputra. The greater number are to be found in a belt of high land stretching along the railway line from the Kamarbund-Ali to the boundary of Lakhimpur.

Further information with regard to the area, site, and population of each garden in the district will be found in Statement A in the Appendix.

Soil. A friable red loam is the soil that proves most suitable for tea. The plant requires a heavy rainfall, but anything in the shape of water-logging is most prejudicial to its growth, and gardens should only be planted out on land which can be well drained. Land, which in its natural state is covered with tree forest, is usually considered the most suitable, but excellent gardens have also been planted out on ordinary grass land.

Varieties of plant.

Four distinct varieties of wild tea are recognised—Assam indigenous, which has a leaf from 6 to $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length by $2\frac{3}{8}$ to $2\frac{7}{8}$ inches in width; the Manipur or Burma indigenous with a larger, darker, and coarser leaf than the preceding variety; Lushai or Cachar indigenous, whose mature leaf is from 12 to 14 inches long, and from 6 to $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide; and the Naga indigenous, which has a long and narrow leaf. In addition to these four varieties there is the China plant, and different kinds of hybrids. The China tea is a squat and bushy shrub with small leaves, which gives a lower yield per acre than the other kinds. It is many years since China seed was planted out in new clearances, and considerable areas covered by this plant have been abandoned. In its natural state the indigenous plant attains to the dimensions of a tree, varying from 20 to 50 feet in height, though its girth seldom exceeds two feet. It has a vigorous growth and yields a large outturn of fine flavoured tea, but is delicate when young. Of the hybrid variety there are many qualities ranging from nearly pure indigenous to nearly pure China. A plant with a very small admixture of China is usually preferred, as this imparts the hardiness, the want of which is the one defect in the indigenous variety.

Seed from the Singlo, Barzeloni, and Taokak gardens is generally considered to be of exceptionally good quality. The price varies largely in accordance with the demand, and of recent years has ranged from Rs.150 a maund in 1897 to Rs.40 a maund in 1903.

System of cultivation. The seed is planted in nursery beds in December and January and kept under shade till the young plants are three or four inches above the ground.* Transplanting goes on during May and June if six months old plants are put out, but as this involves keeping a clearance hoed during the rains, some managers prefer putting out their clearances with one year old plants in December and January, the plants being usually placed from four to five feet apart. During the first two years of their life, little more is required than to keep the plantation clear of weeds. By this time the plants are from two to four feet high, and at the end of the rains they are pruned down to fifteen inches or a foot to encourage lateral growth, and sometimes even lower. In the third year the plants can be lightly plucked over, but the yield of leaf is small. Pruning is continued every year, only about two inches are left of the wood formed since the previous pruning, and any unhealthy or stunted branches are removed. As an extreme remedy, old plants, in which there is a large proportion of gnarled and twisted wood, are sawn off level with the ground, and fresh shoots are allowed to spring from the root itself. During the rains the garden is hoed over 7 or 8 times, in order to render the soil permeable to rain water and to keep down the jungle. At the end of the rains the ground is hoed up to the depth of 8 or 9 inches. The object of this is to protect the land from drought, as the hoed up soil prevents the evaporation of water from the lower strata, and to kill the weeds

* Some managers only shade the plants in unusually dry seasons.

It also adds to the fertility of the land by exposing it to air, light, and changes in temperature. Of recent years various manures have been coming into use. Oil cake and cowdung are sometimes spread about the plants, and exhausted land is occasionally top-dressed with rich soil from a neighbouring marsh. The cost of these operations is considerable and they are not invariably successful from the pecuniary point of view.

Plucking begins in March and April and is continued till the beginning of December. The bud and the two top leaves are taken from each shoot, but fresh leaves soon appear, and in about five weeks' time the shoot is ready to be plucked again. This throwing out of new leaves is termed a "flush," and there are usually six or seven full flushes, in a season; though each bush is picked over every ten days or so, as the twigs develop at different times. The plucking is usually done by women and children, while the men are engaged in hoeing up the ground around the plants. The plant is liable to be attacked by a large number of pests, the best known being the tea mosquito or blight, the green fly, and the red spider. A full account of these pests will be found in "The Pests and Blights of the Tea Plant" by Watt and Mann, Calcutta, 1903.

System of manufacture.

When the leaf has been taken to the factory, it is spread out in thin layers on trays or *changs* and allowed to wither. In fine weather the process takes about 16 to 18 hours, but if it is cold and wet, 24 to 30 hours may elapse before the leaf is ready. When the leaf has

been properly withered it is placed in the rolling machines. The object of rolling is to break up the cellular matter and liberate the juices, and to give a twist to the leaf.

Rolling takes from 30 to 45 minutes, and after this the leaf is placed in a cool room for from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 hours to ferment. It is then placed on trays in the firing machines, through which hot air is driven, until the last trace of moisture has been expelled, and the tea is crisp to the touch. The leaf is then passed through sieves of varying degrees of fineness, and the tea sorted into different grades The best and most expensive quality is called broken orange pekoe, and is made from the bud or tip, which contains all the good qualities of tea in a more concentrated form than any of the other leaves, is stronger, and has a more delicate flavour. The other grades, which are differentiated by the size of the mesh through which they pass, are orange pekoe, broken pekoe, pekoe, souchong, and fannings. After the tea has been sorted it is fired once more to remove any miosture it may have absorbed from the surrounding atmosphere, and is packed in lead-lined boxes while it is still warm. Tea loses largely in weight during the process of manufacture, and about four pounds of green leaf are required to produce one pound of the finished article.

Green tea. Of recent years an attempt has been made to introduce the manufacture of green tea in order to meet the demands of the American market. In 1902, the Indian

Tea Association offered a bounty of 1½ annas on every pound of green tea manufactured. The following year this bounty was reduced by half, and nearly 15,000 lbs. of green tea were exported from Sibsagar. The principal difference between the manufacture of green and black tea is that the former article is not fermented. As soon as the leaf comes in it is steamed in a drum for about half a minute, a process which turns it a bright green colour, and effectually stops all fermentation. Excess moisture is then removed by a hydro-extractor or centrifugal machine, and it is then rolled, fired, and sorted into the following different grades, Pinhead gunpowder, Gun powder, Young Hyson, Hyson No. I, Hyson No. II, Twanky and Dust. The infused leaf should be of a bright green colour, and the liquor of a very pale yellow shade. Most of this tea is sent to North America, but a small quantity is sold in the midland counties of England.

Outturn and prices.

The character of the outturn depends largely upon the season, but still more upon the garden and the system of manufacture followed. In 1868, the Commissioners estimated that the average outturn was about 240 lbs. per acre, but this estimate was probably too low as the average yield in Sibsagar during the five years ending with 1903 was 375 lbs. per acre. The introduction of machinery, and the improvement of the general system of cultivation and management, have rendered it possible to effect a large reduction in the cost of the tea when placed upon the market. In 1868, it was calculated that

tea must be sold at *2s.* a lb. to yield a profit. Twenty years later the average price obtained by tea from the Brahmaputra Valley was 8 annas 2 pies, and though in 1894 it rose to 10 annas 5 pies, in 1898 it dropped to 6 annas 9 pies and, except in 1902, has since remained below that figure.

Forests. The forests of Sibsagar fall into two main classes, the reserved forests, which in 1902-03 covered an area of 876 square milse, and the unclassed state forests, which in the same year occupied the enormous area of 2,839 square miles. Unclassed state forest is, however, simply Government waste land and does not necessarily possess any of the characteristics which are usually associated with the expression forest. It may be a sandy chur, or a huge expanse of low-lying land covered with high grass and reeds and almost totally destitute of trees. It may be a small piece of arable land which has been resigned by its former holder and has not yet been settled with any other person, or it may be, what its name would naturally suggest, *i.e.*, actual tree forest. A considerable proportion of the unclassed state forests of the district are situated in the Mikir Hills, where they are *jhumed* over by the Mikirs.

System of management. The management of the reserved forests is generally entrusted to a Deputy or Assistant Conservator, but the unclassed state forests are under the immediate control of the local revenue officials. Royalty is realized on forest produce removed for purposes of trade, but the villagers are allowed to take from unclassed state forests all that is needed for their own requirements free of royalty.

Situation of the reserves and revenue they yield.

The statement annexed to this chapter gives, in a condensed form, details with regard to the situation, area, trade routes, and market centres for each of the reserved forests in the district, which cover an area of more than ten square miles. These reserves consist of dense evergreen forest and as yet have only been partially explored. There is one small forest at Holongapar near Jorhat, and four in the east of the Sibsagar subdivision; but more than seven-eighths of the total area is situated in the Mikir Hills and the valleys of the Dhansir and the Doiang, where the Nambar and the adjoining reserves form a compact mass covering over 600 square miles of territory. Since the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway some attempt has been made to exploit the resources of these forests. Nahor (*mesua ferrea*) found in close proximity to the railway line has been converted into sleepers. A saw mill has been established at Bokajan, which cuts up simul and other soft wood for tea boxes, and nahor, ajhar, and other hard varieties for sleepers and scantlings; but the trade in timber is not yet of much importance. Table VIII shows the receipts obtained from each reserve. The only forests from which any appreciable quantity of revenue is at present obtained are the Nambar, the Disai, and the Disai valley, and the latter is actually situated in the Naga Hills. The reserves of Golaghat, exclusive of the Nambar, cover an area of 393 square miles, but during the three years ending with 1902-03 they produced an average gross revenue of less than Rs. 500 per annum. There is a second saw mill in the district situated at Garamur, but it

obtains most of its timber from unclassed state forests.

Rates of royalty and most valuable timber tree.

For timber required for sale royalty is paid at the rate of Rs.6 for each reserved tree or 4 annas a cubic foot whichever is less, while for unreserved trees the rate is one anna a cubic foot with a maximum of Rs. 2 for the tree. The most valuable timber trees in the district, all of which fall in the category of reserved trees, are nahor (*mesua ferrea*), ajhar (*lagerstrœmia flos reginæ*), uriam (*bischoffia javanica*), titasapa (*michelia champaca*), sam (*artocarpus chaplasha*), poma (*cedrela toona*), gunserai (*cinnamomum glanduliferum*), amari (*amoora spectabilis*), gomari (*gmelina arborea*), paroli (*stereospermum chelonoides*), khakan (*duabanga soneratioides*) and koroi (*albizzia procera*). The most important second class trees are simul (*bombax malabaricum*), hollock (*terminalia bicolorata*), hollong (*dipterocarpus bondii*), hingori (*castanopsis rufescens*) and hillika (*terminalia citrina*). Large logs are generally dragged by elephants to the nearest river and floated down to the place where they are required. Building-timber, scantlings, and sleepers are frequently sawn up in the forest and thence conveyed by coolies to the nearest cart road. Agar (*aquilaria agallocha*) is found in small quantities in the forests bordering on the Naga Hills. Cane is found both there and on the Majuli, but the receipts under this head are comparatively small. The principal source of forest revenue in the district is the royalty paid by traders. Details with regard to the receipts and expenditure of the department will be found in Table IX.

List of reserved forests covering an area of ten square miles or more.

Name of reserve.	Situation and character of soil.	Area in square miles.	Date of constitution.	Names of valuable timber trees.	Routes of extraction.
Mikir Hills ...	North central portion of the Mikir Hills. Hilly and rocky. Soil, sandy loam.	81	1873	Nahor, Gunserai, Amari, Poma, Titasapa, Am and Hillika.	Not worked at present. The Kaliani river might perhaps be used.
Kaliani ...	North-east portion of the Mikir Hills on both sides of the Kaliani river. Hilly and rocky. Soil, sandy loam.	81	1887	Nahor, Paroli, Sam, Hillika, Hollock, Am Hingori, and Bhela.	Kaliani river to Numaligarh.
Nambar ...	On both sides of the Dhansiri river, between Mikir Hills and Naga Hills. Plains and low hills. Soil, principally a sandy loam.	387	1878	Nahor, Ajhar, Uriam, Titasapa, Sam, Poma, Gunserai, Amari, Gomari, Paroli, Khakan, Koroi, Hollock, and Hollong.	Assam-Bengal Railway which passes through forest.
Diphu ...	Between the Diphu and Dhansiri rivers and Bokajan. Plains undulating in places. Soil, sandy loam.	66	1887	Ajhar, Uriam, and Hollock.	Diphu and Dhansiri rivers to the Assam-Bengal Railway near Bokajan.
Rengma ...	Right bank of the Rengma river at the foot of the Naga Hills. Slightly undulating plains. Soil, sandy loam.	66	1887	Ajhar, Uriam, and Hollock.	Down the Rengma and Doiang rivers to Jamuguri.

List of reserved forests covering an area of ten square miles or more—(concld.)

Name of reserve.	Situation and character of soil.	Area in square miles.	Date of constitution.	Names of valuable timber trees.	Routes of extraction.
Doiang ...	Between the Doiang river and the Naga Hills. Plains slightly undulating in parts. Soil, sandy loam.	95	1888	Ajhar, Uriam, Hollock and a little Nahor.	The Golaghat Wokha road and the Doiang and Kakadanga rivers to Golaghat or Mokrong.
Disai ...	On the right bank of the Disai river at the foot of the Naga Hills. Low hills. Soil, sandy loam.	11	1883	Nahor, Ajhar, Titasapa, Sam, Poma, Gunserai, Amari, Khakan, Hollock. Hollong and Hingori.	The Disai river and the Mokokchung road to the Assam-Bengal Railway line.
Abhaipur ...	Between the Safrai and Taokak rivers at the foot of the Naga Hills. Northern portion level, rest low hills. Soil, sandy loam.	26	1881	Ajhar, Nahor, Sam, Uriam and Poma.	The Safrai river to the Assam-Bengal Railway.
Panidihing ...	On the right bank of the Dimau river. Plains. Soil, loam and clay.	30	1894	Ajhar, only valuable tree found in any quantity.	Dimau and Disang rivers to the Brahmaputra.
Diroi ...	On the left bank of the Diroi river. Plains. Soil, loam and clay.	18	1881	Nahor and Ajhar	Diroi and Disang rivers to the Brahmaputra.

CHAPTER V.

INDUSTRIES.

Arts and manufactures—Pat silk—Muga—Eri silk—Weaving—Pottery—Brass and bell-metal—Mat-making—The fishing industry—Jewellery.

Arts and manufactures. Apart from tea, the industries of Sibsagar are not of much importance. They include the rearing of the lac insect and of silk worms, the manufacture of rough earthenware and metal vessels and jewellery, with mat-making and weaving.

Pat silk. Three different kinds of silk are produced in the district. The most valuable kind is known as *pas* and is obtained from the cocoon of two species of worms, the univoltine or *bar polu* (*bombyx textor*) and the multi-voltine or *horu polu* (*bombyx crœsi*). Both kinds are reared in-doors, on the leaves of the mulberry tree (*morus indica*). The eggs of the *bar polu* take ten months to hatch, the worms usually making their appearance about the beginning of January. The life of the worm lasts from thirty to forty days, and the cocoon takes about six days to spin. The cocoons are of a bright yellow colour, but the silk, when boiled in potash water, becomes perfectly white. From twelve to fifteen thousand cocoons are required to yield one pound of thread, which is worth from Rs. 8 to Rs. 12. The thread obtained from the *horu polu* is not so valuable as that of the *bombyx textor*, but as the worm yields four broods in the

year it finds greater favour with the cultivators. *Pat* silk is as a rule only made to order, and the total quantity produced is small. From 250 lbs. to 350 lbs. of this silk are said to be produced in the Marabazar and Salaguri mauzas of the Namtidol tahsil. The costliness of the silk is due to several causes. The worms are very delicate, the period of incubation is a long one, and the amount of thread obtained from each cocoon is small. The supply of mulberry leaves is limited, and the feeding of the worms in-doors entails some trouble. Lastly the *pat* worm is looked upon as impure, and its cultivation is restricted to the lowly Katanis. They in their turn are naturally not disposed to extend an industry which in itself is an indication of the humble position of its followers.

Muga. The *muga* worm (*antheræa assamœa*) is generally fed on the *sum* tree (*machilus odoratissima*). Five different broods are distinguished by vernacular names, but in the Sibsagar district the only broods commonly reared are the *katia* in October-November, the *jarua* in December-February and the *jethua* in the spring. The complete cycle of the insect lasts from 54 to 81 days, the bulk of which is occupied by the life of the worm. When the moths hatch out the females are at once attached to straws which are hung up inside the house, and are visited by the males, who are allowed to remain free. Each female produces about 250 eggs, which are generally placed in a dark place, and when the worms appear they are at once transferred to the *sum* tree. A band of straw or plantain leaves is fastened round the trunk to prevent

them from descending, and during the night they take shelter under the leaves. Constant vigilance is, however, required to keep off crows, kites, owls, large bats and other pests which prey upon the worm, and hail and heavy rain not unfrequently do damage. When fully grown the worm is about 5 inches long and nearly as thick as the forefinger. In colour it is green, with a brown and yellow stripe extending down each side, while red moles with bright gold bases are dotted about the surface of the body. When the worms are ready to spin, they descend the tree, and are then removed to the house and placed on bunches of withered leaves. Large quantities of *muga* silk are produced in Sibsagar, and *muga* silk cloths form the holiday attire of practically all, and the every-day dress of a very large number of the village women. The worm is reared in every part of the district, but the silk produced is generally required for home use and is not offered for sale. The villages on either side of the Jhanzi river and the Naharani mauza in Golaghat are especially noted for the production of this silk. The silk is reeled from the cocoon. The price obtained varies from four to six annas per oz.

The *eri* worm (*attacus ricini*) derives its name from the *eri* or castor oil plant (*ricinus communis*), on which it is usually fed. From five to six broods are usually reared in the year ; those which spin their cocoons in November, February, and May yielding most silk. As with the *muga* moth, the females, when they emerge, are tied to pieces of reed, and are visited by the males, who are left at liberty. The eggs are hatched in the house and take **Eri silk.**

from a week to 15 days to mature. As soon as the worms appear they are placed on a tray, which is suspended in a place of safety, and fed on the leaves of the castor oil plant. When fully grown, they are about 3½ inches long and of a dirty white or green colour. After the final moulting, the worms are transferred from the tray to forked twigs suspended across a piece of reed, and, when they are ready to spin, are placed on a bundle of dried plantain leaves or withered branches which is hung from the roof of the hut. The matrix of the cocoon is very gummy, and the silk, which is of a dirty white colour, has to be spun, not reeled off. Before this is done the cocoons are softened by boiling them in water and a solution of alkali. Empty cocoons yield about three quarters of their weight in thread. The *eri* industry is not as important in Sibsagar as it is in Lower Assam, owing to the extensive cultivation of the *muga* worm, and comparatively little *eri* cloth is produced for sale. The worm is not considered impure by any caste except the Brahmans.

Cost of Silk cloths.

The most useful garment made of *eri* silk is the *bar kapor*, a large sheet sometimes as much as 20 feet in length by 5 feet wide, which is folded and used as a wrap in the cold weather. It costs from Rs. 10 to Rs. 16. *Eri* cloth is also made into coats and petticoats. Women's clothes, both petticoats and the shawls worn over the bust, are however usually made of *muga* silk, the thread required for a complete dress costing from Rs. 5 to Rs. 7. Some of the articles made of *pat* silk are very beautifully embroidered, and a woman's dress in this

material may cost as much as Rs. 180. The instruments used for twisting and weaving silk are the same as those employed for cotton, but for *eri* thread a stronger reed is employed.

Pottery

The earth used is generally a glutinous clay, which is well moistened with water and freed from all extraneous substances. If it is too stiff some clean coarse sand is worked up with it. A well kneaded lump of clay is then placed on the wheel, which is fixed horizontally and made to rotate rapidly. As the wheel revolves, the potter works the clay with his fingers and gives it the desired shape. The vessel is then sun dried, placed in a mould, and beaten into final shape with a mallet, a smooth stone being held the while against the inner surface. It is then again sun dried, the surface is polished, and it is ready for the kiln. The collection of the clay and firewood, the shaping of the utensils on the wheel, and the stacking of them in the kiln form the men's portion of the work. The women do the polishing and the final shaping. The Hiras, however, do not use the wheel, but mould the vessel on a board, laying on the clay in strips, and the whole of this work is entrusted to the women.

The instruments employed are—the wheel (*chak*), which is about three feet in diameter and rotates on a piece of hard pointed wood fixed firmly in the ground, moulds (*athali*) of different sizes, the mallet (*baliya piteni*), and the polisher (*chaki*).

The principal articles manufactured are cooking pots (*charu*), cups (*mola*), water jars (*kalah*, *takeli* and *thali*), and

larger vessels (*hari*), with lamps, pipes and drums. The profits of the business are said to be small, and the local pottery is being gradually ousted by a superior quality of goods imported from Bengal and by metal utensils which are coming extensively into use. The principal centres of the industry are at various *kumargaos* or "potters" villages in the Teok, Salmara, Hezari and Garamur mauzas in the Jorhat subdivision; at Golaghat; and in the Dhekial, Dergaon, Athgaon, Rangamati and Gurjogania mauzas in the Golaghat subdivision.

Brass and Bell-metal. The brass and metal industry is not of much importance. Its principal centres are in the Namdayang and Dopdar mauzas in the *sadr* subdivision; in the Salmara, Titabar, Charaibahi and Kakajan mauzas in Jorhat; and in the Kacharihat mauza and Golaghat town in the Golaghat subdivision. The number of people supported by the industry is small, and in Jorhat, at any rate, it is said that it is only practised as a subsidiary occupation to agriculture. Bell-metal utensils are usually cast in moulds, but brass vessels are made out of thin sheets of that metal, which are beaten out and pieced together. The implements of the trade consist of anvils of different sizes (*belmuri chatuli*), hammers, pincers, and chisels. The furnace is simply a hollow in the floor of the hut, and the bellows are made of goat's skin. When it is desired to join two sheets of brass together, nicks are cut in one edge, into which the other edge is fitted, and the two are then beaten flat. A rough paste made of *pan*, a substance which consists of three parts of sheet brass with one part of solder, and borax is then smeared over the

join. The metal is heated, the *pan* melts, and the union is complete. The principal articles manufactured are small flattish bowls often used as drinking cups (*lota*, *bati*), jars for holding water (*kalah*, *gagari*), trays (*sarai*), boxes to carry betelnut and lime (*tema*, *temi*) and large vessels used for boiling rice (*jaka*).

Weaving. The weaving of cotton cloths in the villages is still very generally carried on, but there are signs of a gradual tendency to wear imported fabrics, which are fairly cheap and save the women trouble. Though cotton is grown in the hills of the Province, and though many different dyes are to be found growing in its forests, the material employed is almost invariably imported yarn, which is obtained in the requisite shades from the village shop. The loom consists of four stout posts which are driven into the ground so as to make a rectangle about 5′ 10″ × 2′ 6″, and are joined together at the top by cross beams. The implements required for the conversion of raw cotton into cloth, and the system of manufacture followed, are described in the minutest detail in a "Monograph on the Cotton Fabrics of Assam" published by the Superintendent of Government Printing at Calcutta in 1897. Descriptions of mechanical processes of this nature are, however, at their best unsatisfactory, and are hardly intelligible without a series of diagrams. Those curious on the subject would do well to consult this monograph, in which the whole subject is discussed with an elaboration and detail which would be quite unsuitable in a gazetteer. The total cost of the whole apparatus is about ten rupees,

and, as weaving only occupies the leisure moments of the women, the use of home made clothing helps to save the pocket of the villager. Very little cotton cloth is prepared for sale, and there can be little doubt that weaving, as an industry, is commercially a failure ; the price obtained for the finished article being out of all proportion to the time expended on its production. The principal articles made are large sheets or shawls worn as wraps, called *chadar* or *bar kapor*, and smaller shawls, called *chelengs*. A kind of shawl called *paridia kapor* is very finely made and is enriched with a beautifully embroidered border. It costs sometimes as much as Rs. 200. The clothing of the women is almost always made at home and consists of a plain petticoat *mekhla* and a species of scarf *riha* worn over the bust. These garments are, however, often made of silk.

Mats. Mats are of three kinds : *dhari* which are made from strips of *jati* bamboo, *patis* which are made of the *patidoia* reed (*maranta dichotoma*), and *kath* which are made of *gogul* and *mutha* (*cyperus rotundus*). *Patis* are generally made by Ahoms and a section of the Kewats who are called Patiyas and are considered to be slightly inferior to the other members of the caste. They are smooth and cool, and are sometimes boiled in a solution of potash to give them a light blue appearance. They are generally made in the Bakata mauza in the Sibsagar subdivision, the Salmara and Hezari mauzas in Jorhat, and the Ahataguri mauza in the Golaghat subdivision, and cost from As. 6 to As. 12. *Dharis* are manufactured in most parts of the

district and are very cheap. *Kath* mats are made on the Majuli and cost three or four annas each. Other articles of wickerwork manufactured by the villagers are sieves (*salonis*), baskets in which clothes are kept (*jopa*), other baskets (*pasi*), winnowing fans (*kula*), large receptacles for storing grain (*dhuli*), and hats (*jhapi*). These hats are made of the *tokow* leaf (*livistonia jenkinsiana*) on a framework of split bamboo, and are often decorated with coloured pompons and strips of cloth. They are generally about two feet in diameter, but if intended to be used as sun shades for priests or ladies, they may be as much as five feet in diameter. Decorated *jhapis* are known as *sarudoia* and are generally worn either by Muhammadan women or by Nadiyals and Brittial-Baniyas. The ordinary *jhapi* for common use is known as *khorua*, but women sometimes wear a kind called *raidengia* which is made of pieces of split bamboo. In the Namtidol tahsil there is a section of the Chutiya caste whose principal occupation is *jhapi* making, and who are called in consequence *jhapihajia*, and the same name is applied to a section of the Ahoms in the Jorhat subdivision. The best hats are made in the Jhapihajia village in the Dopdar mauza, another village of the same name in the Lahing mauza, and the Mahimelia village in the Ghiladhari mauza.

The fishing industry.

The fishing industry is of considerable importance in Sibsagar. Every villager catches fish for his own use, but fishing on a commercial scale is restricted to the Nadiyals. Of these there were 23,000 in 1901, all of whom

are to a certain extent supported by the produce of their nets, though probably only about one-third are fishermen pure and simple. The right of fishing the more important rivers and *bils* is every year put up to auction, and, in 1902-03, fetched no less a sum than Rs. 35,500. Figures for subsequent years will be found in Table XIV.

The auction purchaser, who is almost invariably a Nadiyal, makes his own arrangements with the fishermen. In the case of *bils* it is said that he takes three-fourths or four-fifths of the fish, when the catch is large, but only one-half when the *bil* is becoming exhausted. In the case of rivers he assesses a certain amount on each of the fishing villages along the bank. The most important fisheries, after the Brahmaputra, are in the Sibsagar subdivision, the Darika river, the Dilih, Garijan, the Jaradhara Rangapani, the Napukhri and Bhatiapar tanks, and the Mitang *bil*. In Jorhat they are the Dilbili, Kakadanga, and Kakila rivers, the Molow, Padumoni, and Raboi *bils*, the Kakohikata *bil*, the Teok Taptapi, and the Kharupatiajan. In Golaghat the Dhansiri river and the Mihi Kaluma and Gela *bils* bring in a considerable revenue. There is no trade in dried or salt fish, but fresh fish is sent from the Brahmaputra down the Jorhat State Railway into the interior.

Nets used. The following are the nets most commonly in use: (1) *Ghakata*, a net in the shape of a shovel which is pushed through the water and is generally used to catch *butchua* fish. (2) *Khewali* a piece of netting to the centre of which a rope is attached while all round the edges there

are weights. · The net is thrown flat on to the surface of the water, when the weights sink and drag the sides of the net together. It is then drawn by the rope to a boat or bank. The following names are applied to this net as the mesh decreases in size, *sayani*, *pachani*, *afalia*, *anytha*, and *ghanjal*. (3) *Langi*, a large net which is stretched right across a river, the bottom being weighted and the top buoyed. The fish are then driven towards the net and become entangled in its meshes. The *tenga langi* is a smaller variety, the two ends of which are brought round to form a circle as the net is not long enough to reach across the river. (4) *Parangi*, a square net the opposite corners of which are fastened to flexible bamboos. The net thus hangs like a sack from a stout pole to which the bamboos are attached and is lowered into the water and raised at intervals. Various wickerwork traps are also used. The *polo* resembles a gigantic wine glass with a short stem made of wickerwork. It is generally used by women, who walk through shallow water and keep pressing the rim on the mud at the bottom. Any fish that are caught are removed through an opening at the top. The *juluki* is a smaller kind of *polo*. The *jakai* is a species of wickerwork shovel which, like the *polo*, is generally used by women. They place the broad end of the shovel on the ground before them, and trample up the mud so as to drive the small fry into it. Conical bamboo traps which are called *dingaru*, *thupa*, *sepa*, and *gui* and are worked on the principle of the lobster pot, are placed in small streams or running water near the rice fields.

Jewellery and lac. Jorhat is noted for its jewellery and enamelling. The ornaments are generally made of thin gold leaf and enamel set with cheap rubies and emeralds. The jewellery of Jorhat is described at length in a Monograph on the Gold and Silver Wares of Assam, published at the Shillong Secretariat Press in 1905. Lac is raised by the Mikirs in the hills, but the total quantity exported from the district is said to be very small.

CHAPTER VI.

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE, COMMUNICATIONS, TRADE, TOWNS AND LOCAL BOARDS.

Rents—Wages—Prices—Food and dress—Dwellings—Economic condition of the people—Conventional restrictions—Communications—Development of steam navigation—Railways—Roads—Rivers—Post and telegraph offices—Commerce and trade—Markets—Towns—Local Boards.

Rents.

From the statement in the margin it will be seen that less than 7 per cent of the total settled area of the district for which statistics have been collected is sublet. The proportion of land held by tenants is fairly high in Western Golaghat, and Central and Southern Jorhat, but is insignificant in Central Golaghat and Eastern and North-Western Sibsagar. The rents exacted are usually in cash and not in kind, and the rate charged very frequently does not exceed the Government revenue on the land, the owner deriving his profit from the assistance which the tenant is required by custom to afford him in cultivating the fields which he retains under his own management. The highest rates charged are those in Central Jorhat, which is the most densely populated portion of the district, where landlords generally ask and

Group.		Percentage of settled area sublet.
Western Golaghat	...	8·5
Central ,,	...	3·2
Southern Jorhat	...	10·3
Central ,,	...	10·0
Northern ,,	...	6·4
North-Western Sibsagar	...	3·73
South Western ,,	...	6·23
Eastern ,,	...	6·13

obtain about Rs. 2 a *bigha*. Even here only 6 per cent of the total area settled at full rates is sublet, and the great mass of the tenants are either garden coolies who supplement their earnings from labour by cultivation, or landholders who have not sufficient land of their own to meet their wants.

Produce rents are of two kinds. In one case the landlord takes half the crop, in the other he takes a certain fixed amount irrespective of the total yield. Where the latter system is in force the amount taken is generally equivalent to a cash rent of from Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-8 per *bigha*.

There was a considerable increase in the number of tenants at the last census, the number, including their dependants, having risen from 9,900 in 1891 to 21,500 in 1901. A considerable proportion of these persons are, however, Assamese who occupy the land held by the great *sattras* at privileged rates, and whose position does not materially differ from that of the ordinary raiyat. There are in fact no signs at present of the growth of a landless class or of there being any danger of rack renting. Coolies who are still working on a tea garden are willing to pay more or less fancy rents for land in the vicinity, but this slight enhancement of the rent is of little importance in comparison with the profits they obtain from hiring out their labour in their leisure hours. Low land on tea estates is generally leased out by garden managers to their coolies, as the possession of a small area of rice land helps to keep the labour force contented and attaches them to the garden.

In spite of the existence of a considerable number of **Wages.** ex-garden coolies who are not debarred from working by any social considerations, labour is said to be difficult to procure. The ordinary wage asked is four annas a day, but ploughmen are usually paid in kind, and are either given the crop from one *bigha* of land for every twelve they plough or allowed the use of their employer's bullocks on their own farm for one day out of three. Most of these labourers are ex-garden coolies or poor Ahoms and Chutiyas, though in some places Assamese from Kamrup come up in search of work. Assamese occasionally work on the roads for the Public Works Department, provided that the work is at some little distance from their homes, but they are unpunctual and dilatory and seldom stay for long. Hired labour is often employed for getting in the rice crop, and none but the gentry regard such work as involving any loss of social status: Kalita women may, in fact, be seen cutting the rice of a fisherman or Nadiyal. Servants are paid from Rs. 2 to Rs. 9 per mensem, but the ordinary rate is Rs 4 or Rs. 5 with food. Artizans are very scarce, and when procurable command high wages.

Table X shows the price of rice, salt, and pulse as re- **Prices.** corded at the markets of Sibsagar, Jorhat, and Golaghat. Rice and pulse have risen in price during the last quarter of a century, while salt has been growing cheaper.

In a rural area like Sibsagar the question of price is of more importance to those who sell than to those who buy, and the undoubted prosperity of the district is to some extent due to the fairly high prices which the

villagers generally obtain. It is, however, difficult to ascertain these prices with any degree of certainty as the *dun*, which is the unit of measure, is a basket which may contain from $3\frac{1}{4}$ to $3\frac{3}{4}$ seers of unhusked rice. Near Jorhat unhusked rice generally sells at the rate of six *duns* or 21 seers for the rupee. In less accessible parts the price seems to range from 7 to 9 *duns*, or from $24\frac{1}{2}$ to $31\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee. Where the raiyats in the western portion of the district have taken advances, as much as 15 *duns* or $52\frac{1}{2}$ seers are taken by the traders for a rupee. Mustard generally sells at the rate of from $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 seers per rupee. The price of molasses is subject to sharp variations. Up to 1902, it had stood fairly steady at between Rs. 4 and Rs. 5 per maund. It fell in that year to Rs. 2-8, but in 1903 was up again to Rs. 5.

Food and dress. The staple food of the people is boiled rice, eaten with pulse, spices, and fish or vegetable curry. Amongst the well-to-do, pigeon or duck occasionally take the place of fish, but fish is a very common article of diet, and is said to be a substitute for *ghi*, which is not very largely used. Goat's flesh is eaten by Muhammadans and members of the Saktist sect, and venison is always acceptable, but is not easily procurable in the central and more densely populated portions of the district. Tea drinking is very common, especially in the early morning. Sweetmeats usually consist of powdered grain mixed with milk, sugar and *ghi*. The ordinary form of dress for a villager is a cotton *dhoti* or waistcloth, with a big shawl or wrapper and sometimes a cotton coat or waistcoat. Women wear a petticoat, a *riha* or scarf tied round the bust, and a shawl.

These clothes are still very often made at home, and in the case of the women, and of the large wraps worn in the cold weather by men, are frequently of silk. Sibsagar is, in fact, the great centre of *muga* cultivation, and most well-to-do women wear a *muga riha* as an article of every day attire, and many don a silk petticoat as well. Foreigners wear cheap imported cotton cloths and blankets and ready made coats, and the use of these articles of clothing is spreading amongst the Assamese. This change is hardly for the better, as the cheap cloths of Manchester are not so artistic or durable as the products of the native loom, and it is doubtful whether the time that was formerly spent on weaving is now employed on any profitable occupation. The *jhapi* or national hat of the Assamese has already been described in detail. Boots and shoes are the exception, and in their own homes even well-to-do people wear wooden clogs. Wooden sandals are also used by villagers when travelling or working in jungle ground, where there are tufts of sharp pointed grass. Reference has been already made to the jewellery manufactured near Jorhat. The extent to which it is worn is a clear index of the prosperity of the district.

The homestead of the ordinary peasant is generally separated from the village path by a ditch or bank on which there is often a fence of split bamboo. Inside there is a patch of beaten earth which is always kept well swept and clean. Round this tiny courtyard stand two or three small houses, almost huts, and in a corner there are generally two open sheds, one of which **Dwellings.**

contains a loom, while the other serves the purpose of a cow-house. The whole premises are surrounded by a dense grove of bamboos, plantains, and areca nut trees, and there are often numerous specimens of the arum family covering the ground. The general effect is picturesque enough, but the presence of all these plants and trees makes the whole place very damp and excludes all sun and air. At the back there is generally a garden in which vegetables, tobacco, and other plants are grown. The houses are small, dark, and ill-ventilated, and must be very hot in summer. They are built on low mud plinths, and are thus extremely damp. The walls are made of reeds plastered with mud, or of split bamboo, the roof of thatch, the rafters and the posts of bamboo.

The houses of the middle class are built on practically the same plan, but they are larger, and wooden posts and beams are often used in place of bamboo, while roofs of corrugated iron are sometimes to be seen. The furniture of the ordinary cultivator is very simple, and consists of a few boxes, wickerwork stools and baskets, brass and bell-metal utensils, and bottles and earthen pots and pans. His bedding is a quilt made out of old cloths, and he either sleeps on a mat on the damp floor or on a small bamboo *machan* or platform. The well-to-do have beds, tables, and chairs in their houses, but these articles of luxury are seldom found outside the towns. This style of house is common to all the Assamese, but in the flooded tracts there are none of the graceful areca palms, as the tree cannot thrive if the

roots remain long under water. These orchards and gardens are a considerable source of wealth to the cultivator, and a house standing on a bare patch of ground has always a somewhat poverty stricken appearance to eyes accustomed to the luxuriant vegetation in which the typical Assamese cottage is embedded. The Miris on the Majuli build their houses on platforms to raise them above the level of the floods, and the village site is practically bare. The prosperity of the Assamese in Sibsagar is indicated by the comfortable appearance of their houses. There are probably few places in Assam where building materials would be more expensive, as there is little Government forest in the more densely settled tracts and jungle-wood posts, thatching grass, and cane have often to be brought from a considerable distance. But the people realize that a comfortable home is conducive to their personal well-being, and are willing to expend the time and labour which its erection and maintenance entails. Ex-garden coolies build, as a rule, small and uncomfortable cottages.

Economic condition of the people satisfactory on the whole.

The Settlement Officer is of opinion that the condition of the people only partly depends upon the fertility of the soil. The best homesteads and a fairly high standard of comfort are frequently found where the land is unfertile, and the material condition of the people is, he thinks, largely a question of their habits. Villagers who consume great quantities of opium and rice-beer are obviously not likely to be well endowed with this world's goods. The purchase or preparation of these luxuries entails a heavy drain on their resources

and a man besotted with beer or opium is hardly likely to make an energetic or a careful cultivator. There are several very fertile villages in the east of the Ghiladhari mauza, in the centre of Khumtai, and in Dihingia in which the condition of the people is unsatisfactory. This, the Settlement Officer reported, was due to their own laziness, and to their indulgence in opium and rice-beer, and far from proposing any abatement of taxation, he suggested a slight enhancement, in the hope that it might stimulate them to make a proper use of their advantages. This view is corroborated by the condition of the people near Jorhat itself. The land is far from fertile, the immense mass of the cultivators subsist on the produce of their gardens and of one crop, transplanted paddy, yet nowhere in Assam will be seen more comfortable homesteads or more prosperous villagers.

Indebtedness.

Most of the local revenue officers consulted report that a considerable proportion of the raiyats are in debt, but the Settlement Officer does not consider that indebtedness has as yet assumed serious dimensions. Money is usually borrowed to defray the expenses of litigation, or of a marriage or *sradh* ceremony, to purchase cattle, or as a temporary measure to meet the land revenue demand. The rates of interest are usually high, and range from 24 to 75 per cent per annum, the higher rates being charged on loans of small sums for short periods. The creditor is, however, often a fellow villager, and in these cases it is doubtful whether the nominal rate of interest is exacted.

The tea industry is the principal source of the prosperity of the people. The total amount disbursed as wages to the garden coolies in 1903-04 was no less than 48 lakhs of rupees; and a considerable proportion of this enormous sum must find its way into the pockets of the villagers in return for the products of their farms and gardens. Silk clothing and handsome jewellery are common wear in most portions of the district, and there can be no question that an energetic and industrious cultivator is sufficiently well off. The sale of surplus paddy is the principal source from which the villagers obtain the money they require. Other sources of income are mustard, pulse, molasses, poultry, fruit and vegetables, and the sale of thatching grass, bamboos, fuel, and of *eri* and *muga* cloth and thread. In the west of the district the people sometimes hollow out canoes or prepare mats for sale, and the Mikirs raise cotton, lac, and chillies. Assamese occasionally take contracts for the building of huts and outhouses for the Public Works Department; and Bengalis work on roads, and still more often on the gardens to which they were previously indentured.

Sources from which people obtain money.

There is probably no surer test of the so-called civilization of a people than the extent to which it has succeeded in freeing itself from conventional and meaningless restrictions. It is only natural, therefore, that in a remote and, till recently, inaccessible Province like Assam, the daily life of the villagers should be surrounded by strange tabus of different kinds. From one of the greatest of the curses of Indian life they at any rate are

Conventional restrictions.

free, and the purdah is a thing that exists in little more than name. The womenfolk of the ordinary well-to-do cultivator would as soon think of interning themselves within the four walls of the house as would a farmer's wife at Home, though when appearing in public, at a railway station or a steamer ghat, they might perhaps discreetly veil their faces, at any rate before a European. Apart from the ordinary restrictions of caste, which need not be referred to here, it is days that seem to be the principal stumbling block to the villagers of Assam. No one ever enjoys making payment of the Government dues, but to the Assamese this process, for reasons which are not quite clear, is especially objectionable on a Monday or a Wednesday. All over the district the villagers avoid these days, but in the Amguri mauza they take exception to Thursdays, and Saturdays as well; while, in the Athgaon tahṣil, Friday is thought an inauspicious day on which to pay the revenue. Seed is not generally sown on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or the day of the new moon, and the full moon, and the eleventh day after either of these events. Mustard (*shoriya*) must not be sown on any lunar day beginning with an s, or pulse (*mah*) on any day beginning with an m. The following list of forbidden days from the Naborani mauza recalls the *fasti* and *nefasti* days of the old legal calendar so vehemently denounced by Cicero. Paddy, pulse, and mustard can only be sown on Mondays and Wednesdays, and if either of those two days happens to fall between the 7th and 10th of the lunar month in the case of pulse, and the 11th and 14th in the case of mustard, they at

once are barred. Revenue should only be paid on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. On Saturday you must not cut thatching grass or bamboos, or even your own hair, on Monday you must not thatch your house, on Tuesday you must not put earth on the floor or cut bamboos or your own hair. Similar restrictions are found in every part of the district, though it is not everywhere that they are observed so carefully.

At the time when we first came into possession of the Province, the difficulty of communications proved a most serious obstacle to its development. The Brahmaputra was the great highway which connected this portion of the Company's dominions with Bengal, but the journey up the river for any boat of ordinary size was a very lengthy business. McCosh, writing in 1837, stated that a large boat took from six to seven weeks to come from Calcutta to Gauhati, though the post, which was conveyed in small canoes rowed by two men, who were relieved every fifteen or twenty miles, reached Gauhati in ten days and Bishnath in three days more.* From Gauhati to Dibrugarh it was a month's journey for a "pinnace," even in the cold weather; † and in the rains against the current the journey took much longer. **Communications.**

Few people presumably had sufficient time or patience to undertake the voyage at that season of the year. Week after week the weary traveller must have pursued his

* Topography of Assam, pages 9 and 82.

† Report on the Province of Assam by A. J. Moffatt Mills, Calcutta, 1854, paragraph 82. Butler in his sketch of Assam puts the journey from Calcutta to Saikhoa in a badgerow *viâ* Dacca at over nine weeks even in the cold weather.

tedious way, his view bounded, as a rule, by high banks of treacherous sand, which then, as now, were continually being undermined by the current, and falling with a crash into the water. It was only occasionally that he could relieve the monotony of the voyage by a stroll on shore, as through the greater part of its course down the valley the banks of the river are covered with high reeds and grass, which are quite impenetrable to a man on foot; and the tedium of this dreary voyage of fully three months' duration must have been immense. Canoes, of course, could travel faster against the current, but a canoe is not a vessel in which the ordinary man can journey for many days in comfort.

Beginning of steam navigation.

This was the state of things for twenty-two years after our annexation of the valley, but in 1848, the Government steamers were deputed to ply between Calcutta and Gauhati. Three years later, the Commissioner, Major Jenkins, made the not unreasonable proposal that three or four times a year they should be allowed to proceed right up the valley to Dibrugarh. His suggestions were negatived by the Marine Department on the ground that the voyages would be financially a failure; but his views were strongly urged on Government by Mr. Mills when he visited the Province in 1853. The proposal met with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor, instructions were issued for the despatch of a steamer in that year, and several voyages were made with results that were not unsatisfactory, even from the financial point of view. The journey from Gauhati to Dibrugarh and back occupied no more than fifteen days, an extraordinary con-

trast to the interminable delay of the same voyage in a country boat. The cargo tendered soon exceeded the carrying capacity of the steamers; and in 1855, Lieutenant-Colonel Jenkins complained that the vessels reached Gauhati fully laden with goods shipped in Upper Assam, so that Gauhati and the ports below derived practically no advantage from the downward service of the steamers.

As was only to be expected, the rates at first charged were fairly high, and a ticket from Calcutta to Gauhati cost no less than Rs. 150. On the other hand, the accommodation was designed on an extremely liberal scale, as the regulations issued in 1851 expressly authorized passengers to carry pianos in their cabins free of freight, provided that they were required for use during the voyage and were not in packing cases; a proviso which suggests a very deliberate voyage as compared with the speedier travelling of the twentieth century. Freight on ordinary stores seems to have been charged at the rate of one rupee per cubic foot between Calcutta and Gauhati; but for some time longer a great part of the trade of the Province continued to go by country boat. The planters could never count on being able to despatch their tea by steamer, and were thus compelled to keep up an establishment of country boats, and having got the boats to use them, and the same objection held good in the case of native merchants.* The cost of working the line was heavy, but in spite of this, it showed a fair

* Memorandum by the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, dated the 7th February 1857.

profit, and it was evident that there would be a great development of the traffic if only facilities were provided for it.

Private steamers put on the river. In 1860, the India General Steam Navigation Company entered into a contract to run a pair of vessels every six weeks, provided that the Government boats were taken from the line; and since that date the steam navigation of the Assam Valley has been in the hands of this Company, and the River Steam Navigation Company, with whom they are associated. But in spite of the existence of a regular service, and the quickening effects of private enterprise, travelling still continued to be very slow. The steamers did not profess to run to scheduled time, the delay at the larger ports for the loading and unloading of cargo was considerable, and the passenger no doubt often required his piano to beguile the tedium of the way. In 1861, the Commissioner, Colonel Hopkinson, was disposed to take a gloomy view of the condition of affairs; and in a letter to Government openly gave expression to the opinion that it would be better to compensate the planters for any loss they might sustain, and abandon the Province, unless Government were prepared to enter upon a course of vigorous material improvement. In the same letter, he drew the following dreary picture of the isolation of Assam:—

"With the furious current of the Brahmaputra, still unconquered by steam, opposing a barrier to all access from without, and not a single road fit for wheeled carriage, or even passable at all for a great portion of the year, there is such an absence of the full tide of life running through Assam, such a want of intercourse between man and man, as does and must result in apathy, stagna-

tion and torpidity, and a terrible sense of isolation, by which enterprise is chilled and capital and adventurers scared away. The profits of tea cultivation should attract hundreds where tens now come, but the capitalist is not always to be found who will venture his money in a country to which access is so difficult as it is to Assam, through which his correspondence travels at the rate of a mile and a half an hour, and in which it may take a month to accomplish a journey of two or three hundred miles; nor on the other hand is it every spirit, however bold, that cares to encounter so dreary a banishment, and to be so entirely cut off from his fellows in a place from which exit is only possible at rare intervals, and must be so literally a prison or tomb to him."

Matters, however, gradually improved, and in 1884, a daily service of mail steamers was started between Dibrugarh and Dhubri, connecting with a steamer which plied between the latter place and Jatrapur. Here the traveller who was pressed for time could take the train to Calcutta, though the line was not of the most comfortable, as more than one river had to be crossed in boats before the capital of Bengal was reached. The introduction of a daily steamer service represented an enormous advance in the facilities for communication between Assam and the outer world. The large steamers were not uncomfortable, but progress was slow, and not only the hour but the date on which they left any given port was far from certain. The would-be traveller could not choose his own time for starting on his journey, but had to select a date on which a steamer was expected at the nearest ghat; and even then he not unfrequently had to endure a weary period of waiting by the river bank. The daily service changed all that, and combined the advantages of regularity with a speed which, in comparison with that attained by the large cargo boats, was most

commendable. During the rains Dibrugarh was reached on the fifth day after leaving Dhubri, while the downward journey was performed in three days. The navigation of the river is not entirely free from difficulty, the companies were not incited to further efforts by competition, and some years elapsed before any attempt was made to reduce the duration of the voyage. On the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway, the companies realized that it was necessary to accelerate their timing if they were to retain their traffic; and during the rains, steamers now reach Dibrugarh on the fourth day from Dhubri, while the voyage from Dibrugarh to Goalundo only occupies three days, though in the cold weather the journey takes a day longer.

A service of fast steamers also plies between Dibrugarh and Calcutta *viâ* the Sundarbans, by which goods can be sent direct without any necessity for handling. Sibsagar possesses a long river frontage and has numerous ports. The steamers call at Dhansirimukh, Neghereting for Golaghat, Kakilamukh for Jorhat, Kamalabari on the north bank, Dikhomukh, Disangmukh for Sibsagar, and Dihingmukh.

The Railway.

A glance at the map will show that, whatever may have been the condition of affairs half a century ago, Sibsagar is well supplied with the means of communication at the present day. Along the north runs the Brahmaputra with its excellent steamer service, along the south there is the Assam-Bengal Railway, and the two are connected by the Jorhat State

Railway which runs from Kakilamukh past Jorhat town to Mariani and Titabar. The main line of the Assam-Bengal Railway, which extends from Chittagong to Tinsukia, enters the district about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Dimapur. From there it runs in a north-easterly direction up the valley of the Dhansiri to the Kamarbandh Ali station about six miles east of Golaghat. It then trends more to the east and runs along the south of the district till it finally enters Lakhimpur beyond Bhojo station. The total length of the Railway in Sibsagar is 152 miles, and the stations going from west to east are Dimapur, Bokajan, Barpathar, Jamaguri, Furkating, Kamarbandh Ali, Titabar, Hilikha, Mariani, Nokachari, Seleng, Amguri, Namtiali, Nazira, Dhodar Ali, Lakwa, Safrai, Bhojo, Sapekhati, and Namrup. By the completion of this railway in 1904 the district has been connected by rail with Gauhati, Dibrugarh, and the seaport of Chittagong. Jorhat, which is situated about the centre of the district, is 137 miles by rail from Dibrugarh, 227 miles from Gauhati, and 482 miles from Chittagong. The most noticeable effect produced by the opening of the line was the diversion of the Naga Hills and Manipur traffic from the Neghereting-Dimapur road to the railway. Travellers and goods for either of these two places had formerly to proceed by steamer to Negheretting, and from this place there was a tedious march of 75 miles to Dimapur. This is now a thing of the past, and Dimapur is only $12\frac{1}{2}$ hours' journey from Gauhati.

The Jorhat State Railway is on a gauge of 2 feet, and was completed in 1885 at a cost of Rs.4,73,000. It runs

from a terminus on the Brahmaputra, which is shifted from time to time to meet the exigencies of that changing river, past Jorhat to Cinnamara, where it divides into two branches, one of which goes to Titabar and the other to Mariani.* The total length of the line including the two branches is 30 miles.

Roads. For internal traffic Sibsagar is well supplied with roads, and, leaving out of account the private roads maintained by tea gardens, there were altogether in 1904 942 miles of road within the district. This allows of one linear mile of road for every five square miles of area, a proportion which is moderate enough, but this figure is, as figures often are, misleading. Amongst the sparsely peopled Mikir Hills and in the valley of the Dhansiri there are practically no roads, and in the Majuli, which is much exposed to flood, there is only a section of the North Lakhimpur-Kamalabari road some ten miles in length. In addition to these regular main roads there are a considerable number of village tracks, over which the raiyats are able to cart their dhan in the cold weather, and, generally speaking, the inhabitants of the Sibsagar plain are well supplied with the means of communication.

The trunk road. The principal road in Sibsagar is the section of the south trunk road which traverses the whole length of the valley from Fakirganj to Sadiya. It enters the district about three quarters of a mile east of Bagori and runs between the Mikir Hills and the swamp that fringes the Brahmaputra as far as the river Dhansiri. East of the

* The Mariani branch was not opened till 1887.

Dhansiri, the road trends a little towards the south, and tea and rice fields take the place of forest, hill, and marsh. After crossing the Jhanzi, the road, following the configuration of the district, turns towards the north, and after passing through Sibsagar enters Lakhimpur on the further side of the Dihing river. The road is of considerable width, and over the greater part of its length is raised well above the level of the highest floods. All the minor streams and rivers are bridged, but the Dhansiri, Jhanzi, Dikho, Disang, and Dihing have to be crossed on ferries at all seasons of the year, and the Diphu in the rains. The total length of the road in Sibsagar is 116 miles. There are inspection bungalows at the following places: the length of the stage in miles going from west to east is shown in brackets after the name:—Kaziranga (11) Bokakhat (10), Kamargaon ($10\frac{1}{2}$), Badlipar (7), Dergaon (8), Kakadanga (5), Jorhat (11), Kakojan (10), Jhanzi (9), Gaurisagar (8), Sibsagar ($7\frac{3}{4}$), and Dimu (12).

The Dhodar Ali. After the trunk road probably the most important thoroughfare in the district is the Dhodar Ali which takes off from the trunk road at Kamargaon and runs south-east to Golaghat. Here it turns to the east and passes right along the south of the district into Lakhimpur, a total distance of 119 miles. There are inspection bungalows along the road at Titabar, Mariani, Char Ali, Tengapukri, Sonari, Sepakati, and Dillih.

Roads in Golaghat. Other important roads in the Golaghat subdivision are the road between the Brahmaputra at Neghereting and Golaghat, and the road from Golaghat to Wokha garden, whence a bridle path runs to Wokha in the Naga Hills.

The road from Golaghat to Dimapur used formerly to carry all the traffic for the Naga Hills and Manipur, but since the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway it has ceased to be of any importance, as there is no local traffic. In the south of the subdivision a road runs east from Wokha garden to the Kakadanga. But these are only the main thoroughfares, and so well is this portion of the district provided with the means of communication that in Central Golaghat there is not a single village which is more than three miles distant from a road.

The Jorhat roads. In Jorhat there is a very complete system of roads, which, starting from the town as a centre, run to various points on the Dhodar Ali. On the west there is the Kamarbandh Ali, then comes the Na Ali which crosses the Dhodar Ali and is extended through the south of the Amguri mauza to the Kakadanga. The Garh Ali runs at a little distance from and parallel to the Na Ali to Titabar, but throws off a branch at Cinnamara which goes to Mariani. Further east again is the Ladoigarh road, which runs from a point near the Brahmaputra in a south-easterly direction to the Jhanzi.

This is, however, but a skeleton outline of the system of Jorhat. Any attempt to describe the minor roads in detail would be alike tedious and confusing.

The Sibsagar roads. Sibsagar *sadr* is also well supplied with roads, most of which are a legacy from the days of native rule. The *paik* system provided the Ahom Rajas with an unlimited supply of labour, which was freely utilized in the excavation of enormous tanks and the construction of high embanked roads. The trunk road runs through the

northern section of the subdivision, the Dhodar Ali near the hills towards the south, and between them and parallel to them run the Sologuri and Rajgarh Alis. But besides these there are many other roads, the most important of which is perhaps the road from Nazira to Disangmukh.

Improvement of the roads during the last 25 years.

During the last quarter of a century the roads of the district seem to have been much improved. Sir W. W. Hunter, in his statistical account of Sibsagar, published as late as 1879, wrote as follows:—

"Owing to the numerous small streams which intersect the country, and the frail bamboo bridges which last only for a short time, most of the roads are impassable during the rains. The general mode of transit when the country is dry, is by elephants or coolies; no bullock carts are used by the people of the district, but wheeled conveyances have lately been introduced by some of the planters, and found to answer remarkably well. The only drawback to a more extensive use of the cart or waggon is the want of good bridges on the main road, and the few small branch roads."

This would be a very misleading description of the condition of affairs in Sibsagar at the present day. Ferries there are, no doubt, but the proportion is for Assam unusually small. There is not a single ferry on any important road in the Jorhat subdivision or in Golaghat east of the Dhansiri, except across the rivers in the flooded tract between the trunk road and the Neghereting steamer ghat. The bridges are no longer frail structures of bamboo, but are generally made of iron girders supported on strong wooden posts. Bridge building has, in fact been carried to such lengths that no less than Rs.67,000 were expended by the Jorhat Local Board in bridging the Disai where it crosses the Dhodar Ali. Hired coolies

are nowadays hardly ever used as a means of transport, and, according to a census taken in 1904, there were no less than 3,700 carts plying in Sibsagar. Round Jorhat the roads are very sandy and remain in comparatively fair order even during the rains, but in other parts of the district they are much cut up if used to carry heavy traffic in the rains. The roads to the steamer ghats are the ones that suffer most, and in wet weather the roads from Disangmukh to Sibsagar and from Neghereting to Golaghat become almost impassable.

Rivers. The rivers in the district are also used for purposes of commerce. A boat of four tons burthen can proceed up the Disang as far as the Dillih ghat in the rains, and the Mohmara ghat in the cold weather, and small feeder steamers occasionally visit the latter station when the river is full, to fetch away the tea manufactured by the Singlo Tea Company. Country boats in the rains go right up the Dikho to Santak, but in the cold weather a boat of four tons burthen can hardly get as far as Nazira. Boats also go up the Jhanzi and the Kakadanga in the rains, but in the cold weather these rivers are too shallow to be much used.

In July and August a feeder steamer runs up the Dhansiri to Golaghat once or twice a week, and a boat of four tons burthen can make this station even in the cold weather. In the rains it can get as far as Dimapur, but traffic on the Dhansiri as on the other rivers in the district has been much affected by the opening of the Assam-Bengal Railway. The Ahoms seem to have been expert boat builders, they possessed a numerous and powerful

fleet, and a separate section of the people was entrusted with the duty of providing the king with boats and keeping them in proper order. All of this special knowledge has unfortunately been lost. The only boats manufactured by the natives of the district are canoes hollowed with fire and adze out of logs of wood, and such planked boats as there are, are imported from Bengal.

Post and telegraph offices. The following statement shows what an enormous development there has been of postal business since 1875. A list of the places at which post and telegraph offices are situated, will be found in the appendix.

Number of post offices in		Number of letters and post cards omitting thousands delivered in			Number of Savings Bank accounts in	Balance at the credit of the depositors in.
1875	1903-04	1861-62	1870-71	1903-04	1903-04	1903-04
13	52	18	62	793	1,372	Rs. 5,08,000

Commerce and trade: imports. The Assamese have no commercial aptitude, and the natives of Sibsagar have allowed the whole of the profits of the wholesale and of a large portion of the retail trade to be absorbed by foreigners. The principal men of business are the Kaiyas, the astute Marwari merchants whose shops are to be found on every tea garden, at the three headquarters towns, and wherever else there is money to be made. They are practically the sole importers of the district, and bring up from Calcutta piece-goods, clothes and blankets, grain and pulse of various kinds, salt, oil, *ghi*, iron, cement, corrugated iron, umbrellas, and thread.

Centres of trade. The chief centres of trade are the three small towns of Sibsagar, Jorhat, and Golaghat; Nazira, the headquarters of the Assam Tea Company; and Dimapur which is the depôt for the trade of the Naga Hills and Manipur.

None of these places are, however, of much importance, and the opening of the Assam-Bengal Railway is said to have diminished what little trade there used to be in Sibsagar and Jorhat. There is nothing in the conditions of the district to conduce to the formation of small towns. There are no arts or industries to draw the people together, and the overwhelming importance of the agricultural interest has a decentralizing effect on trade. On every tea garden there is a Kaiya's shop, and Kaiyas' shops are scattered about the villages to buy up the surplus dhan, and sell piece-goods, salt, oil, tobacco, and yarn to the peasants. But so scattered are they that there are only about sixty places in the district which have as many as three shops or more. The names of these places will be found in a statement in the Appendix.

Exports. Apart from tea, which is shipped direct to Calcutta, the principal articles produced within the district are dhan and mustard. Surplus dhan is either sold by the cultivator to the coolie, who buys it in the villages or at the local market, or to a middle man in the shape of a Kaiya or Muhammadan trader. Mustard is bought either by the Kaiya, the local oilman or *teli*, or by the Ramdiyals from Kamrup who come up in the rains with their boats and ship it to Gauhati. The Kaiyas also purchase a certain quantity of *muga* silk, and, on the Majuli, cane; but the bulk of their profit is derived from sales, and

they have not that lucrative trade with the hill tribes which contributes so much to their prosperity north of the Brahmaputra.

Markets. A great deal of business is, however, transacted at the local markets, which, for the convenience of the coolies, who are the purchasing section of the community, are usually held upon a Sunday. Here the villagers bring their surplus dhan or rice, fruit and vegetables, molasses, goats and poultry ; and the traders come with grain of various kinds, piece-goods, tobacco, salt, oil, and the various other articles which form their stock. Ready made clothing is on sale, and all the other little articles of cheap haberdashery which are likely to catch the coolie's eye and appeal to his untutored taste. A list of these bazars will be found in the Appendix. The largest and most important are probably those held at Dhofder and Titabar. There is not much trade with the hillmen except in cotton which is brought down by the Lhota Nagas to Golaghat ; but between 30,000 and 40,000 maunds of Manipuri rice have of recent years been brought annually to Dimapur. Most of the external trade of the district is still carried by the steamers plying on the Brahmaputra, though a portion of it will now no doubt be transferred to the Assam-Bengal Railway by which it can be conveyed direct without handling to the sea at Chittagong. The principal exports are tea, which in 1903 was probably, even at wholesale prices in Calcutta, worth not far short of £ 800,000, silk cloths, mustard, cotton, and hides.

Municipal. Sibsagar. The small town of Sibsagar has been constituted a station under Act V, B. C. of 1876, and its affairs are managed by a committee, three of whom are officials and hold their seats by virtue of their office, while the remaining seven are nominated by the Chief Commissioner. The principal sources of income are a grant from Government, fees from markets and pounds, and a tax assessed at the rate of 4 annas per mensem per 100 square feet of shop sites, and of 4 per cent on the annual value of other buildings. The total income of the station in 1901 was under Rs.12,000, but the population of Sibsagar in that year was only 5,712. The civil station is built on the edge of the magnificent tank to which reference has been already made, and the native quarter lies between it and the Dikho. The total area of the town is 2·94 square miles, which is served by 17 miles of road, $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles of which are metalled. Drinking water is obtained from the Sibsagar tank, from two smaller tanks which have been excavated by the Commissioners, from three masonry wells, and from the Dikho river. The view of the tank with its fringe of trees, and the Hindu temples, public offices, and bungalows dotted along the bank is picturesque enough, but the rest of the town is little more than a prosperous village. There is comparatively little trade, and had it not been the headquarters of the district the place would have been of very small importance. Even this source of importance it is losing, as the transfer of the headquarters of the district to Jorhat has recently (1905) been sanctioned.

Jorhat, the headquarters of the subdivision of that name, is situated on the left bank of the Bhogdai river. The little town only covers an area of ·64 of a square mile and had a population in 1901 of 2,899 souls, but it has been formed into a union under Act V, B. C. of 1876. There are five Commissioners who are nominated by the Chief Commissioner. The Subdivisional Officer acts as Chairman and takes an active part in the management of municipal affairs. The total income, excluding the opening balance in 1901, was only Rs. 6,500, Rs. 2,000 of which were provided by the Local Administration. There are ten miles of road within the town, but only half a mile is metalled. Most of the public buildings are situated within the earthen ramparts of an old Assamese fort, which was erected at the time of the Moamaria insurrection towards the end of the eighteenth century. There is a little tank within this fort, on the banks of which the cutchery, the residence of the Subdivisional Officer, and one or two other public buildings have been erected. The town is connected by rail with the Brahmaputra at Kakilamukh, and the Assam-Bengal Railway at Mariani and Titabar, and is the centre of some trade. **Jorhat.**

Golaghat is also a union under Act V, B. C. of 1876, but it is even less populous than Jorhat, as there were only 2,359 inhabitants at the last census. The town covers an area of ·78 of a square mile and contains 13 miles of unmetalled and half a mile of metalled road. As in Jorhat, there are five Commissioners nominated by **Golaghat.**

Government, but the management of the town vests to a great extent in the Subdivisional Officer. The total income in 1900-01 excluding the opening balance amounted to about Rs.6,000, one-fourth of which was provided by the Local Administration. The bazar is situated on the right bank of the Dhansiri, and is the depôt to which the Lhota Nagas bring their cotton.

There are no other towns in the district, and no places of sufficient importance to merit detailed description. An account of each village was prepared at the last settlement, but these accounts have not been considered to be worth printing even in connection with the settlement proceedings.

Local Boards. In the early days of British Administration there was little money available for public works of any kind, and what there was was generally expended under the control of the Public Works Department or the District Magistrate.

In 1872, the management of the district roads was entrusted to a committee presided over by the Deputy Commissioner. The funds at their disposal were partly obtained from tolls and ferries on local roads and other miscellaneous sources, but principally from grants made by the Bengal Government from the amalgamated district road fund. In 1874, when Assam was erected into a separate Administration, the Government of India assigned one-seventeenth of the net land revenue for local purposes. The district improvement fund was then started, and the administration of its resources was as before entrusted to the Deputy Commissioner assisted

by a committee. The actual amount placed at their disposal was not large, and in 1875-76 the total income of the district funds of the Province was only Rs.1,85,000, which was a small sum in comparison with the twelve and a half lakhs of rupees received by the Local Boards in 1903-04. In 1879, a Regulation was passed, providing for the levy of a local rate, and the appointment of a committee in each district to control the expenditure on roads, primary education, and the district post. Three years later the district committees were abolished by executive order, and their place was taken by boards established in each subdivision, which are the local authorities in existence at the present day. The Deputy Commissioner is Chairman of the board of the headquarters subdivision, but each of the other boards in the district is presided over by the Subdivisional Officer. The Local Boards are entrusted with the maintenance of all roads within their jurisdiction, except a few main lines of communication, the provision and maintenance of local staging bungalows and dispensaries, and the supervision of village sanitation, vaccination, and the district post. They are also in charge of primary education, subject to the general control of the Education Department, and are empowered to make grants-in-aid to schools of higher grade, subject to certain rules. For these purposes they have placed at their disposal the rate which is levied under the Assam Local Rates Regulation of 1879, at the rate of one anna per rupee on the annual value of lands, as well as the surplus income of pounds and ferries, and some minor

receipts. This income is supplemented by an annual grant from Provincial Funds. The principal heads of income and expenditure are shown in Table XVII.

The annual budgets of the boards are submitted to the Commissioner for sanction. The estimates for all works costing Rs.500 or over must be submitted to the Public Works Department for approval, and important works, requiring much professional skill, are made over for execution to that department. Less important works are entrusted to the board surveyors.

CHAPTER VII.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

Native system of land revenue—Early settlements—The settlement of 1893—The Settlement of 1902—Growth of land revenue—Established and fluctuating cultivation—Annual and periodic leases—Settlement staff—Land tenures—Mauzas and tahsils—Realization of land revenue—Unsettled waste—Excise—Income tax—Stamps—Public works—Government—Criminal and Civil Justice—Registration—Police—Military Police—Volunteers—Jail—Education—Medical—Survey.

Land revenue: native system.

The system in force under the Ahom kings was one of personal service. The whole of the adult male population was divided into bodies of three men called *gots*, each individual being styled a *paik*. In theory one *paik* out of the three was always engaged on labour for the State, and while so employed was supported by the remaining members of his *got*. In return for his labour each *paik* was allowed 8 *bighas** of *rupit* land, and the land occupied by his house and garden, which is now called *basti*, free of revenue. Any land taken up in excess of this amount was assessed at 4 annas a *bigha* In addition to this each adult *paik* paid a poll tax of one rupee.

At the time when the district was under the management of Purandar Singh the poll tax was raised to Rs. 3 per *paik*, but on the resumption of his territories in 1838 the country was measured up and the revenue

* One area=3·025 *bighas*.

assessed upon the land itself and not upon its occupants. The revenue at first taken was only 4 annas per *bigha* for *rupit*, or land growing transplanted rice, and 2 annas a *bigha* on all other kinds of land. In 1844 the rate on *rupit* was raised by one anna a *bigha*, and in 1849 the rate on other land was raised to 3 annas 6 pies, but this very moderate enhancement was accompanied by a concession to the gentry of the district. There could be no question that the upper and middle classes amongst the Assamese had suffered severely from the emancipation of their slaves and the abolition of their privileges, and as a measure of relief the curious concession subsequently described as 'ten twenties' was sanctioned by the Government. Persons who paid Rs.20 or more in revenue were assessed at only half the usual rates, and people paying anything between Rs.20 and Rs.10 were assessed at Rs 10 only.*

Hopkinson's settlement.

In 1865, the Commissioner, Lieutenant-Colonel Hopkinson, proposed to discriminate between *basti* or garden and other land and to raise the *bigha* rates in Assam Proper to Re. 1 per *basti*, 10 annas for *rupit*, and 8 annas for other land. No detailed enquiries were made, there was no attempt to estimate the comparative value of the three different classes of land, there was no discrimination between good and bad land in the same class, or even between district and district. It was argued that the revised rates were so moderate that they would not have an oppressive incidence even on the worst land on which they were imposed. Colonel Hopkinson declared that the

* *Vide* Mile's report on Assam.

existing assessment was ridiculously low, and in support of his opinion pointed out that in 1864-65 the receipts from opium were about four lakhs of rupees more than the total land revenue of his division, an excess which in those days represented a difference of about 40 per cent. The new assessment was successfully introduced in 1868-69, and in spite of the enormous enhancement the revenue was collected without difficulty.

The settlement of 1893.

The next settlement was made in 1893. The threefold division of land was retained, but instead of imposing the same rate on all land of the same class throughout the district, the villages were divided into four grades and the rates assessed varied with the grade of the village*. The villages were provisionally graded by the Director of Land Records and Agriculture, the class in which each village was placed being determined by the demand for land, and not by any intrinsic considerations of the value of the produce, the fertility of the soil, or the profits of cultivation. The demand for land was estimated by ascertaining the density of the population, the proportion of settled to unsettled land, and the proportion of fluctuating cultivation. These lists were sent to local officers for examination and were modified by them in view of the fertility of

* The following were the rates assessed per *bigha* :—

Class.	Basti. Rs. a.	Rupit. Rs. a.	Faringati. Rs. a.
1st	1 6	1 0	0 12
2nd	1 4	0 14	0 10
3rd	1 2	0 12	0 9
4th	1 0	0 10	0 8

the soil, the facilities for bringing the produce to market, and the rents paid by sub-tenants where ascertainable. This enquiry was carried out by the ordinary district staff within the space of a single cold weather, and the results obtained made no pretensions to scientific accuracy. Such accuracy was considered to be unnecessary, as it was not intended to impose anything like the maximum assessment on the land. The Government had no desire to assess up to its fair share of the value of produce of the soil, and under these circumstances it was contended that it would be waste of time and money to have recourse to any minute and elaborate classification of the soils, to crop experiments on a large scale, or to a close examination of all the elements that affect the net profits of the cultivator. The theory on which the settlement was based was that the worst lands were capable of bearing the assessment imposed, and that Government alone was a loser by its inequalities.

The settlement of 1902. The soil unit. The resettlement which was begun at the close of 1902 was carried out in a much more elaborate and scientific manner than any of its predecessors. While the maps and records were being brought up to date, the Settlement Officer made detailed enquiries with the object of ascertaining the classes into which the land could be most suitably divided, and the relative value to be allotted to each class. The unit of settlement was what is known as the soil unit. Each soil unit pays a certain quantity of revenue, the actual sum assessed per soil unit varying with the village. To every *bigha* of land is

assigned a certain number of soil units, the number varying with the class of land concerned. Thus in every *bigha* of *bhal bari*, or first class homestead land, there were 24 soil units, whereas in every *bigha* of badly flooded land there were only 4, and whatever revenue might be assessed on badly flooded land in the village, first class homestead land, if there was any, paid six times as much. The data used when determining the number of soil units to be allotted to each class of land were (1) the local enquiries of the Settlement Officer and his Assistants, (2) experiments made with the view of ascertaining the average quality of the crop, (3) the opinions expressed by certain selected persons, and (4) the views of the raiyats who were assembled at various centres. Considerable weight was attached to the opinions of the raiyats, as it was thought that they at any rate should know the comparative value of the different kinds of land they held. It will be seen that the process of differentiation was carried much further at the new settlement than at the one which preceded it. In 1893, the maximum rate per *bigha* in a village could never be more than double the minimum. In 1903, the maximum rate might be six times the minimum. In 1893, all land in the village followed the class of the village. In 1903, there was no such restriction, and a small area of poor land in an otherwise rich village could be assessed on its own merits.

Value assigned to each soil unit at the new settlement.

After the maps and records had been brought up to date a special staff was deputed to determine the class into which each field or homestead fell. The total

number of soil units in the block, or group of several mauzas into which for re-assessment purposes the district was divided, was then ascertained*, and the former revenue of the block divided by this figure. The quotient represented the incidence of revenue per soil unit under the former settlement and was known as the *unit incidence.*

The next stage in the proceedings was the determination of the new *unit rate*, the rate which was to be assessed on each soil unit during the current settlement.

The Settlement Officer first decided whether he would raise or lower the unit rate for the block as a whole, and took as his standard in assessing villages the unit rate he had fixed on for the block. This was the rate imposed on the average village, while villages above or below the average had the rate raised or lowered in proportion to the extent to which they seemed to differ from the mean.

The general condition of the inhabitants, the prices they could obtain for their produce, and the facilities for trade which they enjoyed, were the principal factors taken into consideration when determining the value to be assigned to the soil unit of the village.

Classes of land.

Land in Sibsagar was divided into 13 different classes. Homestead or *bari*, was classified in three grades, good (*bhal bari*), average (*bari*), and poor (*takula bari*) Land fit for the growth of transplanted rice (*rupit*) was distributed under four main heads, *charanpara* or land enriched

* The area falling under each class was known and all that was required was to multiply the number of *bighas* in each class by the number of soil units in the class.

by the drainage of the village site, *alatiya*, or clay loam, *balichehiya* or sandy land, and *jalatak* or land liable to flood. Each of these four classes was again divided into *da* or low and *bam* or high land. Except in the case of the flooded class, *da* land is naturally the more valuable of the two. Two other classes were *chechukiya* or shaded lands, and *faringati* which embraced all land which was neither *bari* nor *rupit*.

The following statement shows the number of soil units assigned to each class of land:—

BARI.			RUPIT.								Chechukiya.	Faringati.
Bhal bari.	Bari.	Takala bari.	*Charan-para.*		*Alatiya.*		*Balichehiya.*		*Jalatak.*			
			Da.	Bam.	Da.	Bam.	Da.	Bam.	Da.	Bam.		
24	18	9	21	13	16	9	12	7	4	12	6	6

The revenue payable by a soil unit differed in the different villages and varied from nine pie to two annas. These arrangements did not, however, hold good in the case of areas where fluctuating cultivation is the rule, such as the Majuli and the marshes along the south bank of the Brahmaputra. One rate was here imposed on all land in a block which was not either good homestead or *rupit* land.

Growth of the land revenue.

The statement in the margin shows the gradual expansion of the land revenue and the settled area since the district first came under our administration. The enormous expansion of the settled area is due partly to the natural growth of the population, partly to the importation of great numbers of coolies.

A. D.	Rs.	Acres.
1840-41	73,330	Not available.
1851-52	1,48,911	157,780
1865-66	2,70,937	295,978*
1868-69	4,34,606	Not available.
1892-93	8,72,484	674,419
1893-94	12,01,689	659,133
1902-03	14,19,127	762,960

Established and fluctuating cultivation.

The system of cultivation in the district falls into two main heads, established and fluctuating. In the established area the staple crop is *sali* or transplanted paddy, land is not readily resigned, and it frequently possesses a considerable market value. In the fluctuating tracts the staple crops are mustard, pulse, and summer rice (*ahu*), and continual change is one of the essential elements of cultivation, the same field being seldom cropped for more than three years in succession. Fluctuating cultivation is, however, only practiced on the Majuli and in the marshes that fringe the southern bank of the Brahmaputra.

Annual and periodic leases.

The bulk of the land on which the staple crops of the district are grown is held direct from Government by the actual cultivators of the soil on annual or periodic lease. The periodic lease confers a right of re-settlement and a heritable and transferable title. Annual leases merely authorise the occupation of the land for a single year, though in practice the

* Commissioner's letter dated 21st September 1867.

rights of transfer, inheritance, and re-settlement are recognized. The only drawback of the annual lease lies in the fact that if the land happens to be required by Government, it can be resumed without payment of compensation to the occupant. Land held under either form of lease, or any individual field within the holding can be resigned, on formal notice of the fact being given to the Deputy Commissioner or Subdivisional Officer.

The mandal. The basis of the land revenue system is the mandal, the village accountant and surveyor who draws a modest stipend ranging from Rs.8 to Rs.12 per mensem. In March he proceeds to his circle, inspects the fields which have been formally resigned to see whether they have been actually relinquished, tests the boundaries of fields taken up in recent years to see whether they are in accordance with the map, and surveys land which has been broken up for what is called the regular settlement or for which a formal application has been filed. His two principal registers are the *dagchitha* in which particulars are entered for each field within the village, and the *jamabandhi* or rent roll, which classifies the fields by holdings, and shows the area covered by each lease. During the hot weather he is occupied with the revision of his maps and registers, and the preparation of his leases. When the winter comes, he again proceeds to the field, distributes the leases he has prepared, and surveys the land which has been broken up since his former tour, and which is included in what is known as the *dariabadi* or supplementary settlement.

He is also required to prepare statistics of the area under different crops, he assists in the collection of the revenue, and is often ordered to report on local disputes connected with the land. In most Provinces in India a settlement is concluded for a term of years. During its currency no land which is held on lease can be resigned, and there is not, as a rule, any appreciable quantity of waste land to be taken up. This system is not in force in the Assam Valley. Land held on ordinary lease can be resigned at any time, provided that all the revenue due is first paid in and that proper notice is given to the authorities. These resignations are an essential element of the system of fluctuating cultivation and in 1903-04 over 18,000 acres were excluded and over 32,000 acres were included in the settlement. Figures for each year since 1900-01 will be found in Table XII.

Superior settlement staff.

Above the mandal comes the supervisor kanungo, a peripatetic officer, on pay ranging from Rs.30 to Rs.40, who checks his work both in the field and in the office. The superior revenue officers are called sub-deputy-collectors and draw salaries ranging from Rs.100 to Rs.200 per mensem. The appointments are usually made by selection from candidates who must be of good physique and moral character, of respectable family, under 25 years of age, and must either have taken a university degree or have read up to that standard.

The total sanctioned staff for the Sibsagar district is 3 sub-deputy-collectors, excluding those employed as tahsildars, 10 supervisor kanungoes, and 205 mandals. In cadastral areas the average size of a mandal's charge is 9 square miles of settled land.

Land tenures. Lakhiraj and Nisf-khiraj land.

The different tenures in the district fall under two main classes—(1) those under which land is held for the cultivation of ordinary crops, and (2) those under which grants have been made for the growth of tea or other crops, which are not included amongst the ordinary staples of the Province, and which require a considerable amount of capital for their production. The bulk of the land included in the first class is settled under the ordinary rules at full rates, but there are also considerable areas of revenue free (*lakhiraj*) land and land settled at half rates (*nisf-khiraj*). In the time of the Ahom kings the whole of this land is said to have been held rent free, but in 1834 the Government of India ruled that "all rights to hold lands free of assessment, founded on grants made by any former Government, must be considered to have been cancelled by the British conquest. All claims, therefore, for restoration to such tenures can rest only on the indulgence of Government, without any right." Mr. David Scott, the first British Commissioner of Assam, found that, even under the Ahom Rajas, these revenue free lands had been assessed at the rate of five annas a *pura** and he

* A *pura*=4 *bighas*. 3·025 *bighas*=1 acre.

imposed this cess, which was subsequently raised to eight annas, upon them. The Government of India then directed that an enquiry should be instituted into these claims, and that all cases in which land was held on *bonâ fide* grants dating from before the time of the Burmese conquest, or on account of services which were still performed, should be reported to them for orders. These instructions were not fully observed by the Commissioner of that time, Captain (subsequently General) Jenkins. This officer, for reasons which have never been ascertained, drew a broad distinction between *debottar* or temple lands, and *brahmottar* and *dharmottar* lands, *i.e.*, lands which were devoted to some religious purpose but were not actually the property of a temple. The former he released from all claims for revenue ; on the latter he imposed the rate assessed by Mr. Scott, which happened to be half the full rates prevailing at the time. No report was even submitted to the Government of India, and no final orders were ever received from them, but the right of the former class of proprietors to hold free of revenue, and of the latter at half the usual rates, has been definitely recognized.

The total area of *lakhiraj* land in the district in 1902-03 was 39,095 acres, and of *nisf-khiraj* land 4,991 acres. The area settled year by year at full rates is shewn in Table XV. In the Mikir Hills no attempt is made to measure up the area actually occupied by the people, and in lieu of land revenue a tax of Rs. 2 is imposed on every house.

Two sets of rules were in force for the grant of land for tea prior to 1861. The underlying principle in each case was that the land should be held on long leases at low but progressive rates of revenue, and that precautions should be taken against land speculation by the imposition of clearance conditions.

Grant of land for the cultivation of special crops.

Between 1861 and 1876 the fee simple tenure of waste land grants was put up to auction at an upset price of Rs. 2-8 an acre, which in 1874 was raised to Rs. 8. The holders of grants under the earlier rules of 1838 and 1854 were allowed to purchase a fee simple tenure by payment of twenty times the revenue then due, provided that the clearance conditions had been carried out Advantage was very generally taken of this concession, and there are now in the district only 5,194 acres of land held under the rules of 1838, and 726 acres under the rules of 1854, while there are 124,570 acres held on fee simple tenure. The existing rules came into force in 1876. The land is sold at an upset price of Re. 1 per acre, for, though it is nominally put up to auction, there is no case on record in which more than one applicant appeared to bid. For two years the grant remains revenue free and the rates gradually rise to 8 annas an acre in the eleventh and one rupee in the twenty-first year. The lease runs for 30 years, and when it expires the land is liable to re-assessment. The total area settled under these rules will be found in Table XV.

Mauzas and tahsils.

When Mr. Mills visited the district in 1853 it was divided into 130 mauzas with an average revenue of about Rs. 900 per mauza. The general tendency since that

date has been to increase the size of the unit of collection and to reduce the cost. In 1867, the mauzadars, as the collecting officers were called, received 15 per cent of the revenue as commission, and were allowed half the revenue of land reclaimed during the currency of the settlement. Three years later their commission was reduced to 10 per cent, and, in 1872, the further restriction was imposed that this 10 per cent could only be drawn on the first Rs.6,000 of revenue, 5 per cent being allowed on revenue in excess of that sum. In 1883, the idea gained ground that Government would do better by putting the mauzadar aside and employing salaried officials as a collecting agency. Mauzas were accordingly amalgamated and placed in charge of an official called a tahsildar, who was remunerated by a fixed salary and was exempted from the responsibility imposed upon the mauzadar of paying in the revenue on the due dates, irrespective of the amounts actually collected by him.

The first tahsils opened in Sibsagar were at Namtidol, Jorhat, and Golaghat in 1892, after experience had already been gained of the working of the system in Lower Assam. Three years later tahsils were started at Sibsagar, and at Athgaon in the Golaghat subdivision. In that year about 50 per cent of the total land revenue demand was collected through the agency of tahsildars.

Comparative advantages of tahsildars and mauzadars.

The tahsildari system is cheaper than that of collection through mauzadars, the cost in one case being about 5 per cent, in the other 7 per cent of the gross amount realized. Serious difficulties are, however, experienced in dealing direct with such a large body of raiyats, and

there is no doubt that the tahsil system is not as popular with the people as the one which it replaced. A mauzadar of experience knows whether delay in payment is due to shortness of funds or to recusancy; he knows the time which is most convenient for payment in individual cases, and as he is not bound by the *kist* dates, his collection admits of an elasticity which no Government rules can establish. It has the further advantage of providing a body of representative men, who, while regarded by the people as their leaders, are bound to the Government by the facts of their position. It has accordingly been decided to try the experiment of gradually breaking up the tahsils, and substituting in their place mauzadars who will be entrusted with the duty of collecting from Rs. 20,000 to Rs.30,000 of revenue. In accordance with this policy the tahsils at Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat and Athgaon have already been resolved into their constituent mauzas.

Arrangements for the realization of revenue.

The revenue demand on account of the regular settlement is due in two instalments, three-fifths on January 15th and two-fifths on the 15th February, except in those villages which meet the Government demand from the sale of mustard and pulse, where it is due in one instalment on March 15th. The demand on account of the supplementary settlement is also due in one instalment on that date. If a raiyat defaults a notice of demand is issued calling upon him to pay up the amount due.* This

* It has recently (1905) been proposed to authorise District Officers to dispense if they consider it necessary with the notice of demand, and also to impose a small fine not exceeding one rupee on habitual defaulters.

usually has the desired result, but if further steps are called for the defaulters property is attached. It is very seldom necessary to do more than this, but, as a last resort, the goods and even the lands of the defaulter can be sold. In 1903-04, notice of demand was issued on account of 12 per cent of the total land revenue demand and property was attached on account of 5 per cent. The number of cases in which it was necessary to have recourse to sale was very small, and the revenue on account of which property was sold only represented 0·2 per cent of the total demand. The number of cases in which an estate is put up to auction is comparatively small, and it is not unfrequently the case that, even when advertised for sale, it attracts no bid. In the more sparsely settled portions of the district it has hardly any selling value, and where it would fetch a considerable price it seldom comes to the hammer.

Area of unsettled waste.

The figures in the margin show the total area of the district as reported by the Assistant Surveyor-General, Calcutta, the settled area, and the area of reserved forests in 1902-03, and the area of waste land at the disposal of Government in that year. No less than 59 per cent. of the total area of the district falls in the latter category, but it must not be supposed that the whole of this area is fit for cultivation or human habitation. The figures include the area of roads and of tracts that are permanently under water, which in Sibsagar with its network of rivers draining into the mighty

		Sq. miles.
Total area of the district	...	4,996
Settled area ...	...	1,192
Area of reserved forests	...	876
Area of waste land	...	2,928

Brahmaputra amounts to a very considerable total. It also includes the area of the Mikir Hills which could never support a dense population, of the unhealthy valley of the Dhansiri, of extensive tracts which are submerged during the rainy season, and are hardly fit for permanent habitation, and of land which is too high or barren to be fit for the growth of food crops. It has already been shown in the chapter on population that over the greater part of the plains portion of the district the density is fairly high, and the proportion of good waste land still available for settlement is probably quite small. There is in fact a tendency to emigrate from Sibsagar to Lakhimpur, and this to any one acquainted with the character and habits of the Assamese clearly indicates that in the localities from which emigration is taking place some pressure on the soil is beginning to be felt. The total area and the area of unsettled waste in each revenue unit outside the Mikir Hills is shown in Table XV. A. The greater part of this waste is situated in the flooded tracts on either side of the Brahmaputra.

In 1903-04, the revenue raised under the different heads of excise in Sibsagar was just over seven lakhs of rupees, nearly five-sevenths of which were derived from opium. Prior to 1860, no restriction was placed upon the cultivation of the poppy. The evil effects of unrestrained indulgence in opium were undeniable, and in that year poppy cultivation was prohibited, and the drug was issued from the treasury, the price charged being Rs. 14 a seer. This was raised to Rs. 20 in 1862, Rs. 22 in 1863, Rs. 23 in 1873, Rs. 24 in 1875, Rs. 26 in 1879, **Excise. Opium.**

Rs. 32 in 1883, and Rs. 37 in 1890, the price at which it now stands. While Assam was under the Bengal Government licenses for the retail vend of opium were issued free of charge. In 1874, a fee of Rs. 12 per annum was levied on each shop, and in the following year it was raised to Rs. 18. Between 1877 and 1883 the right to sell opium in a particular *mahal* was put up to auction, but this system was found to be unsatisfactory, and in the latter year the individual shops were sold as is done at the present day.

Steady decrease in consumption.

The statement in the margin shows that during the last quarter of the century there was a steady decrease in the quantity of opium issued in the district.

	Maunds issued.
1873-74	482
1879-80	464
1889-90	397
1899-00	369

This, no doubt, was partly due to the repressive effect of a heavy excise duty, partly, in all probability, to the spread of civilization and to the growth of a feeling that opium-eating was not quite good form. In 1835, Capt. Mathie, Collector of Darrang, reported that opium cost about Rs. 5 a seer. Since 1890, it has cost from Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 a seer, and it is evident that such high prices must tend to check the growth of the opium habit amongst those who have not yet taken to the drug. The facilities for purchase have also been very much curtailed. In 1873-74 there were 1,378 licensed shops in the Sibsagar district—in 1903-04 there were only 186. At the same time it cannot be denied that opium smuggling is comparatively easy, and the profits of the business large. In 1879, the difference between the treasury price of opium at Patna

and Sibsagar was Rs. 10 per seer, but since 1890 it has been twice that sum. In 1901, a small preventive force consisting of one inspector, two sub-inspectors and five chaprasis was sanctioned for employment in the Province, but they did not succeed in detecting any cases of importance, and they have recently been amalgamated with the ordinary excise staff.

Method of consumption: Ahoms great opium eaters.

Opium is generally swallowed in the form of pills or mixed with water and drunk Madak is made by mixing boiled opium with pieces of dried pan leaf, and stirring it over the fire. The compound is then rolled up into pills and smoked Chandu is made out of opium boiled with water till the water has all evaporated, and is smoked like madak in the form of pills. Opium is not generally smoked in Assam, and this form of taking the drug is usually supposed to be more injurious than when it is simply swallowed. The figures in Table XVI suggest that the Ahoms are still very much addicted to the opium habit. The Mikirs are great consumers of the drug but, in spite of the presence of a large Mikir population in the west of the Golaghat subdivision, the amount of opium issued in this portion of the district, is not half of that issued in Sibsagar. Even Jorhat, though it has a larger population than Sibsagar *sadr*, takes very little more than half the opium used in the eastern subdivision.

Country spirit.

The Assamese are seldom spirit drinkers, and the indigenous tribes generally content themselves with the strong beer (*laopani*) which they brew from rice.

Provision has, however, to be made for the foreign population who consume large quantities of country spirit. This spirit can be easily prepared by any cooly, so that to prevent illicit distillation Government has to provide them with reasonable facilities for obtaining the liquor they require. Up till the end of 1904-05 it was the practice to put up the right to manufacture and sell liquor at certain specified localities to public auction. The statement in the margin shows the number of shops and the prices paid for them of recent years. The foreign population increased very nearly three-fold during the last twenty years of the century, yet it will be seen that the number of shops was only increased by seven. The large increase in revenue was partly due to the growth of the liquor drinking population, partly to competition amongst the liquor vendors which forced up the prices of the shops at auction. It has recently been decided to establish a central distillery in the district as it is thought that by this means it will be possible to ensure the supply of a better quality of liquor. The amount of revenue raised from country spirit in each subdivision will be found in Table XVI.

	No. of shops.		Revenue. Rs.
1873-74	9	...	11,424
1879-80	26	...	33,314
1889-90	35	...	64,864
1899-1900	33	...	1,43,385

Laopani.

Laopani, or rice beer, is the national drink of the unconverted tribes, and a special name, *modahi*, is applied to those who have to some extent attorned to Hinduism, but have not yet abandoned their ancestral liquor. It is also taken by some of the humble Hindu

castes, and is largely used by garden coolies if facilities are not afforded to them for obtaining country spirit. The following is the usual system of manufacture followed. The rice is boiled and spread on a mat, and *bakhar* is powdered and sprinkled over it. After about twelve hours it is transferred to an earthen jar, the mouth of which is closed, and left to ferment for three or four days. Water is then added and allowed to stand for a few hours, and the beer is at last considered to be ready. The usual proportions are 5 seers of rice and 3 chattaks of *bakhar* to half a *kulsi* of water, and the liquor produced is said to be much stronger than most European beers. Liquor is sometimes illicitly distilled from *laopani* or boiled rice, by the following simple method. An earthen pot with a hole in the bottom is placed on the top of the vessel containing the *laopani* or rice, and the whole is set on the fire. The mouth of the upper pot is closed by a cone-shaped vessel filled with cold water, and a saucer is placed at the bottom of the pot over the hole. The vapour rises into the upper of the two jars, condenses against the cold cone, with which the mouth is closed, and falls in the form of spirit on to the saucer beneath. Care must, of course, be taken to see that the various cracks are closed against the passage of the spirituous vapour, but this can easily be done with strips of cloth.

Ganja. Ganja is usually mixed with water, kneaded till it becomes soft, cut into small strips, and smoked. Wild ganja grows very freely in Assam, but it is doubtful whether it is much used except as a medicine for cattle.

It does not produce such strong effects as the ganja of Rajshahi, but the leaves are sometimes dried and mixed with milk, water, and sugar to form a beverage. The number of shops, the quantity of ganja issued, and the revenue obtained in each subdivision will be found in Table XVI. The quantity taken in Golaghat is comparatively small.

Income tax. The total receipts under the head of income tax in 1903-04 amounted to Rs. 35,132, about two-thirds of which were realized from the salaries paid to garden managers and their staff. The receipts under the head of "other sources of income" amounted to Rs. 8,362 paid by 203 persons. More than three-fourths of this was derived from the 141 persons assessed under the head of commerce and trade, in spite of the fact that the wealthiest Kaiyas in Jorhat and Golaghat pay income tax in Calcutta on the profits made in the Sibsagar district. Forty-one persons of the professional class were assessed in 1903-04, and paid altogether Rs. 1,268. The assessment under Part IV of the Act is based on the reports of the local revenue officials. The district is a progressive one and the receipts from income tax have steadily increased. In 1887-88, they amounted to Rs. 28,600 and they rose steadily to Rs. 44,400 in 1902-03. It is a significant fact that the increase in the assessment under the head "other sources of income" was considerably higher than the increase under the head "salaries paid by companies and private employers." The marked decrease in the following year was due to Act XI of 1903

which raised the minimum taxable income from Rs. 500 to Rs.1,000.

Stamps. The receipts from stamps in 1903-04 amounted to Rs. 77,300, three-fourths of which were derived from the head judicial stamps. The revenue raised under this head was higher than that derived from any other district in the Assam Valley; the revenue from non-judicial stamps was exceeded in Lakhimpur alone. Details for later years will be found in Table XIII

Public Works. Public Works are in charge of an Executive or Assistant Engineer who is usually assisted by four upper and four or five lower subordinates The Public Works Department are entrusted with the construction and maintenance of all the larger public buildings. The most important are the jail, the public offices, schools and post and telegraph offices at district and subdivisional headquarters, circuit houses, dâk bungalows, and inspection bungalows on provincial roads. Inspection bungalows on other roads are maintained by the Local Boards. The most important provincial roads which are directly under the Department are the trunk road which runs for 114 miles through the district, the road from Golaghat to the Brahmaputra, and the road from Disangmukh steamer ghat through Sibsagar to Nazira railway station. The Public Works Department are also responsible for the maintenance of the protective embankments which have been thrown up along the rivers in the neighbourhood of Sibsagar. It has already been explained that Local

Board works that require professional skill or engineering knowledge are usually made over to the Executive Engineer for execution. The principal difficulties with which the Department has to contend are the absence of an artizan class, and the scarcity and dearness of unskilled labour. It is to these two causes that the heavy cost of public works in Sibsagar is largely due.

Government. For general administrative purposes the district is divided into three subdivisions: Sibsagar (*sadr*) is at present under the immediate charge of the Deputy Commissioner, and Jorhat and Golaghat are entrusted to assistant magistrates who are almost invariably Europeans. The headquarters of the district will, however, soon be transferred from Sibsagar to Jorhat. The Deputy Commissioner is allowed two subordinate magistrates and one sub-deputy collector as his immediate assistants, and a second magistrate and a sub-deputy collector are usually posted at each of the stations at Jorhat and Golaghat.

Criminal and civil justice. Appeals lie to the Deputy Commissioner from the orders passed by magistrates of the second or third class and from the orders of first class magistrates to the Judge of the Assam Valley districts. Appeals from the Judge lie to the High Court of Fort William at Calcutta. In 1902, there were 7 stipendiary and 4 honorary magistrates in the district, and the former decided 2,640 and the latter 74 original criminal cases. In the course of these proceedings 5,890 witnesses were examined. Altogether there were 1,975 cases under the Penal Code return-

ed as true, the immense majority of which were either offences against property or the human body. Criminal work is heavier in Sibsagar than in any other district of the Assam Valley. Elsewhere the Assamese are singularly free from criminal tendencies or instincts, but cases of burglary are by no means uncommon in the neighbourhood of Jorhat. The number of murders, though not as high as in Lakhimpur, is still above the average. In the ten years ending with 1889 there were on the average six during the year. In the next decade the annual average rose to 11, and in 1900 there were 19, or one case for every 30,000 people, a ratio more than four times as high as that prevailing in the Province of Bengal in 1901. Most of these murders are committed in a fit of passion and are often due to jealousy. Now and again, however, there are cases which argue a considerable degree of intelligence in the perpetrator of the crime. One such occurred in 1897. An Assamese living near Jorhat went to a Kaiya's shop and informed the merchant that there was a Miri living near the Brahmaputra who wished to purchase coral and gold leaf. He offered to guide the Kaiya to the house, and the man set out taking with him an assortment of jewellery from which the Miri could make his choice. The whole story of the Miri was a fabrication, and at a lonely part of the road the Assamese murdered and robbed the unsuspecting Kaiya. Then, with the object of diverting suspicion from himself, he went to the shop and enquired for the missing man, saying that he had been compelled to leave him near the Miri's house. After some days, when the

Kaiya failed to return, suspicions were aroused, and an enquiry was instituted which resulted in the detection and execution of the murderer The average annual value of property said to be stolen during the decade ending with 1899 was Rs.25,000. Cattle theft is fairly common, and attempts have even been made to steal elephants, in spite of the difficulties attendant on the concealment and disposal of the missing property.

Special rules are in force for the administration of criminal justice in the Mikir Hills tract. The jurisdiction of the High Court is barred, and the Chief Commissioner is the chief appellate authority. The Deputy Commissioner is empowered to pass sentences of death, transportation, and imprisonment of seven years or upwards subject to the confirmation of the Chief Commissioner. Fine or fine and imprisonment may be awarded in lieu of any other punishment, provided that the amount of punishment awardable for such offence under the Indian Penal Code be not exceeded, and no appeal lies of right from any sentence by the Deputy Commissioner of less than three years' imprisonment.

Civil Justice. There is no separate staff for the trial of civil cases and assistant magistrates act as Munsifs, while the Deputy Commissioner is Subordinate Judge. He has, however, recently been relieved of the task of hearing civil appeals, which was a very heavy tax upon his time, and they now go direct to the Judge at Gauhati. Civil work is much heavier than in the other districts of the Assam Valley. In 1902, there were 2,257 cases instituted in the Munsifs'

Courts, while 157 appeals were disposed of by the Subordinate Judge, a number more than half of the total returned for the whole of the Assam Valley Division. The great majority of the suits instituted in the Munsif's Courts are for money and moveables, and nearly three-fourths of the total were disposed of without contest.

Registration. The Deputy Commissioner is the District Registrar, while one of the assistant magistrates acts as sub-registrar at each of the subdivisions. The number of documents registered is small, and, in 1903, was only 1,696, but this is a larger number than was registered in any other district of the Assam Valley, with the exception of Goalpara.

Police. The civil police are in charge of a District or Assistant Superintendent of Police. The sanctioned strength consists of 3 inspectors, 25 sub-inspectors, and 303 constables. 172 smooth bore Martinis are allotted to Sibsagar, and a reserve of men is kept up at the district and subdivisional headquarters who are armed with these weapons and are employed on guard and escort duty. Up-country men, Nepalese, and members of the aboriginal tribes are usually deputed to this work, though attempts are made to put all the constables through an annual course of musketry. Table XIX shows the strength and cost of the police in 1881, 1891, and 1901. Rural police are not employed, such assistance as is necessary being given by the village elders or *gaoburas*. In addition to their regular duties in connection with the prevention and detection of crime, the police are required to check the returns of vital statistics, manage pounds, enquire

into cases in which death has not been due to natural causes, to furnish guards and escorts, and to serve all processes in warrant cases. The cost of living is considerable, the demand both for skilled and unskilled labour is much in excess of the supply, and the pay of an ordinary constable is not sufficient to attract or retain a good class of recruit. The result is that the men resign their appointments on the slightest provocation, a fact which affords a serious obstacle to the efficient management of the force. For police purposes the district is divided into ten investigating centres. The names of these stations and the strength sanctioned for each will be found in Table XX.

Military Police. A portion of Sibsagar marches, however, with independent territory, and during the winter season it is thought desirable to have a small garrison of men trained for military duties available for cases of emergency. A detachment consisting of sixteen non-commissioned officers and men of the Lakhimpur military police battalion is accordingly stationed for six months of the cold weather at Abhaipur, at the foot of the hills occupied by the independent Naga tribes.

Volunteers. In addition to the regular force of police there are a considerable number of volunteers residing in the district who can be called out when required. A corps of mounted infantry was first enrolled in Sibsagar in 1883 with a strength of 104 members. Eight years later the volunteers in the four upper districts of the Valley were formed into one corps known as the Assam Valley Mounted Rifles, and in 1896 the Mounted Rifles

were converted into Light Horse. The strength of the corps in 1903 was 312, 130 of whom were residing in Sibsagar.

There is a jail at the headquarters station of the district and subsidiary jails at both of the two subdivisions. Th jail compound at Sibsagar covers an area of 1·81 acres and is surrounded by a masonry wall. It contains accommodation for 40 male and 9 female convicts. The subsidiary jails at Jorhat and Golaghat are surrounded by bamboo palisades. The buildings are constructed of bamboo and timber, with thatched roofs at Jorhat and roofs of corrugated iron at Golaghat, and can accommodate 31 prisoners of all classes at the former and 32 at the latter place. Convicts are usually employed on gardening, oil pressing, paddy husking, and surki pounding, and when sentenced to more than 3 months' imprisonment are sent to Sibsagar. Female prisoners with sentences of over one month's imprisonment are drafted to Tezpur or Gauhati. Drinking water at Sibsagar and Jorhat is obtained from the tanks at those two places, and at Golaghat is drawn from a masonry well. Jail.

In 1841, Mr. Robinson of the Gauhati College described the state of education in the Assam Valley as being "deplorable in the extreme."* He pointed out that, unlike the Province of Bengal, where every village had its teacher supported by general contribution, provincial school had only recently been introduced in Assam, and their Education.

* A descriptive account of Assam, page 277.

number was in consequence extremely small. Vernacular schools were first established at Sibsagar in 1840, and in 1847-48 there were 10 vernacular schools in the district. The next few years witnessed very little progress, as on the occasion of Mr. Mill's visit in 1853 there were only 9 schools of all grades. The condition of these schools was, moreover, far from satisfactory, and the Collector only proposed to keep up four, which were situated at Nazira and the headquarters of each of the three subdivisions. 1874-75 is the first year for which complete statistics are available, and the following abstract shows the progress of education since that year. Figures for years subsequent to 1900-01 will be found in Table XXII.

Year.	No. of secondary schools.	Pupils.	No. of primary schools.	Pupils.	Total number of pupils.	No. of persons in district to each pupil.	Percentage under instruction to those of school-going age.	
							Males.	Females.
1874-75 ...	6	820	130	2,918	3 738	79	...	...
1880-81 ...	5	693	125	3,745	4,438	83	15·32	0·24
1890-91 ...	8	1,104	257	7,676	8,780	52	23·38	1·40
1900-01 ...	14	1,928	328	10,110	12,038	50	24·00	1·50

Sibsagar is unusually well supplied with high schools. There are Government high schools at Sibsagar and Jorhat an aided school at Nazira, and three unaided schools at the headquarters of each of the three subdivisions. The Jorhat and Sibsagar Government schools are two

of the largest in the Province, and the school at Jorhat is the only Government high school in Assam in which the direct expenditure is entirely met from the fees paid by the pupils. Middle schools are situated at Sibsagar town, Hatipati, Jorhat, Cinnamara, Golaghat, Dingao and Marangi.

Secondary education. High schools are those institutions which are recognised by the Calcutta University as capable of affording suitable preparation for the Entrance Examination. The boys are taught from the earliest stage of their education up to the Entrance course as prescribed by the University of Calcutta, but many leave school without completing the course. Till recently English was taught in all the classes. The boys in the lowest class no longer learn that language, but the standard of instruction is higher than that prevailing in lower secondary (middle) schools. English is the medium of instruction in the first four classes of high schools, in the lower classes and in other schools the vernacular is employed. The course of instruction at middle English and middle vernacular schools is the same, with the exception that English is taught in the former and not in the latter. The following are the subjects taught in the middle vernacular course—(1) Assamese, comprising literature, grammar and composition, (2) History of India, (3) Geography, (4) Arithmetic (5) Elements of Euclid (Book I), mensuration of plane surfaces and surveying, and (6) simple lessons in botany and agriculture.

Primary education. Primary schools are divided into two grades, upper and lower, but the proportion of boys in upper primary schools

is only two per cent. of the total number, and this class of school, like the middle vernacular, is slowly dying out. The course of study in lower primary schools includes reading, writing, dictation, simple arithmetic, and the geography of Assam. In upper primary schools the course is somewhat more advanced, and includes part of the first book of Euclid, Mensuration, and a little History. The standard of instruction given still leaves much to be desired, but efforts have been recently made to improve it, by raising the rates of pay given to the masters. Fixed pay is now awarded at average rates of Rs. 8 per mensem for certificated and Rs. 5 per mensem for uncertificated teachers, supplemented by capitation grants at rates ranging from 3 annas to 6 annas for pupils in the three highest classes.

There is a survey school at Jorhat in which villagers can be trained to serve as mandals, and scholarships are granted to a limited number of Assamese boys who are brought up as artizans in the Jorhat railway workshops. Law classes are also held at Sibsagar.

Medical staff.

The district is in the medical charge of the Civil Surgeon who is stationed at Sibsagar. It contains seven dispensaries, and the supervision of the work done at these institutions is one of the most important duties of the Civil Surgeon. He also acts as Superintendent of the Jail, he controls and inspects the vaccination department, and is required to visit and report on all tea gardens on which the death rate for the previous year has exceeded 7 per cent.

The conditions under which the people pass their days are far from conducive to a long mean duration of life. Their houses are small, dark, and ill ventilated, and in summer must be exceedingly close and oppressive. They are built upon low mud plinths, and are in consequence extremely damp, and the inmates instead of sleeping on beds or bamboo platforms, which would cost them nothing to provide, often pass the night on a mat on the cold floor. Their attire, which is suitable enough for the warm weather, offers but a poor resistance to the cold and fogs of winter, and many lives are annually lost from diseases arising from chills, which might have been avoided by the purchase of a cheap woollen jersey. The houses are buried in groves of fruit trees and bamboos, which afford indeed a pleasant shade, but act as an effective barrier to the circulation of the air, and increase the humidity of the already over-humid atmosphere. Sanitary arrangements there are none, the rubbish is swept up into a corner and allowed to rot with masses of decaying vegetation, and the complete absence of latrines renders the neighbourhood of the village a most unsavoury place. The water-supply is generally bad and is drawn either from shallow holes, from rivers, or from tanks in which the villagers wash their clothes and persons. All of these are undoubtedly factors which contribute to produce a high mortality, and nearly every one of them could be eliminated.

Complete absence of rural sanitation.

In comparison with Central and Lower Assam Sibsagar is, however, a very healthy district. The greater part of it consists of a wide plain lying south of the

Brahmaputra, and for some reason or another it would seem that the south bank of the river, except in those parts where the Assam Range projects into the valley, is much healthier than the country on the north even though it may be situated at some distance from the Himalayas. There is not much jungle near the principal centres of the population, the proportion of unsettled land is comparatively small, the winter season is cold and bracing, and the rainfall is abundant. It has hitherto been exempt from the dreadful scourge of *kala azar*, and if only the people would pay more attention to the most elementary laws of sanitation, the indigenous population would in all probability increase with great rapidity.

Vital statistics. Vital statistics are reported by the *gaobura* or village headman to the mandal of the circle, this report being in theory submitted every second week. In practice they were received at much longer intervals, as the *gaobura* was an unpaid servant of Government and not very amenable to discipline. It has recently been decided to allot to each *gaobura* $2\frac{2}{3}$ acres of land revenue free, and it will now be possible to enforce a stricter adherence to the rules. Between 1891 and 1901 the mean recorded birth and death rates were 24 per mille, and it is obvious that both of these figures were much below the truth. The statistics of age recorded at the census are, however, so unreliable, and the disturbing effect of immigrants is so great that it is not possible to fix a normal birth and death rate for the district.

Causes of mortality.

Fever and bowel complaints are the forms which death most often takes in the Sibsagar district, at any rate according to the official returns. These returns are, however, so inaccurate, and so little reliance can be placed on the diagnosis of the reporting agency, that the figures hardly repay examination. Most fatal illnesses are accompanied by a rise in temperature, and the villages are in consequence very prone to ascribe every death to fever. Epidemics of cholera from time to time produce a high mortality, for though it is apparently endemic in the district, it occasionally breaks out with quite exceptional violence. The abstract in the margin shows the recorded death rate from this cause in the years when cholera was most prevalent.

	Cholera. Death rate per mille.
1884 ...	... 6·2
1886 ..	... 4·1
1888 ...	... 5·3
1890 ...	... 11·6
1894 ...	... 5·7
1897 .	... 9·8

Small-pox also appears from time to time in a virulent form. The highest death rates per mille recorded from this cause during recent years were 2·2 in 1896 and 5·1 in 1897. Vaccination has, however, made considerable progress amongst the people, and small-pox is not as a rule responsible for many deaths. Other diseases which are prevalent in the district are measles, whooping cough with its attendant pulmonary complications, worms, and parasitic skin diseases.

Increase in facilities for obtaining medical aid.

Though there can be little doubt that many lives are annually lost which could be saved by proper treatment,

it is satisfactory to know that of recent years there has been some increase in the facilities for obtaining medical aid, and the extent to which the people avail themselves of the advantages now offered to them. From the statement in the margin it appears that for every patient treated in 1881 there were 6 in 1901. The principal dispensaries are those situated at Sibsagar, Jorhat, and Golaghat, each of which had a daily average attendance in 1903 of 64, 82, and 50, respectively. The diseases for which treatment is most commonly applied are malarial fevers, worms, cutaneous disorders, dysentery, diarrhœa, rheumatic affections, bronchitis, and other diseases of the organs of respiration. The number of patients treated at each dispensary in 1900 and the succeeding years will be found in Table XXV.

	Dispensaries. No.	Patients treated. No.
1881	2	8,561
1891	3	19,220
1901	6	51,765

Native methods of midwifery.

There are very few professional midwives amongst the Assamese, and a woman in her confinement is generally attended by her relatives or friends. In difficult cases they can render little help, and recourse is had to Heaven for assistance. A goat or duck is sacrificed, and *mantras* are tied round the neck and arm of the woman or inscribed on a brass vessel which is placed where her eyes can fall upon it. In cases of false presentation attempts are made to drag the child out by anything that offers, and the abdomen is kneaded in the hope that the fœtus may be expelled. In the

absence of medical aid, and this aid is seldom to be obtained, the mother in such cases generally dies. The confinement sometimes takes place in a small hut which has been specially constructed for the purpose, and the patient's bed generally consists of an old mat laid on the floor. The unfortunate mother receives practically no assistance. If the labour is a natural one, all is well, but if complications arise the case has usually a fatal termination, and it is probable that many lives are lost owing to disregard of the rules of cleanliness which are of such paramount importance in these cases. The nucleus of a professional midwife class is, however, to be found in the *bejinis* or female doctors, who receive a small remuneration for attending cases and practise beyond the limits of their own villages.

In addition to the Government dispensaries there is a hospital on almost every one of the tea gardens in the district.

A professional survey of the district was made at **Survey.** the time when Assam was still a division of Bengal and maps were published in 1873. They are on the scale of one mile to the inch and show the sites of the villages and the physical features of the country. A topographical map on the scale of four miles to the inch was published in 1882 and is now under revision. An area of 1,521 square miles, which included the more densely populated portions of the district, was cadastrally

surveyed by the professional party during the seasons of 1888-89, 1889-90, and 1891-92. The maps are on the scale of 16 inches to the mile, and in addition to topographical features show the boundaries of each field. Certain areas which were omitted by the professional party were subsequently surveyed by local agency on the basis of a theodolite traverse, and the results obtained from the cadastral survey both by the professional and local agency have been utilised in the subsequent revision of the maps.*

*The area so surveyed up to 30th September 1899 was 208 square miles.

APPENDIX.

List of Tables.

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens.

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION.			Miles.			
1	Amguri ..	Amguri Tea Co., Ld. ...	Dopdar ...	20	2,003	923	1,415
2	Athabari ...	Mesdames Hosack, Andrew and Reid.	Thaura Panidihing.	12	933	(*a*)[illegible]81	(*b*)626
3	Bamunpukhri ..	Assam Co.	Nazira ...	14½	1,800	597	1,318
4	Banamali ...	Srijut K. P. Chaliha, pleader.	Khalaighogora...	25½	260	140	183
5	Banfera ...	Singlo Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	30	155	Included in	Jabaka.
6	Barahi ...	Barahi Tea Co. ...	Do. ...	31½	1,289	395	409
7	Barbam ...	Amguri Tea Co., Ld. ...	Dopdar ...	17½	2,669	914	1,586
8	Barhat ...	Barhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ..	48	1,859	430	378

9	Barsilla ...	Jhanzi Tea Association ...	Dopdar ...	16	1,358	(c)914	(c)1,821
10	Baruasali ...	Grob Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	46	514	Included in Sonari.	123
11	Barnapukhri ...	Jhanzi Tea Association ...	Dopdar ...	17	171	Included in	Barsilla.
12	Bihubar ...	Bihubar Tea Co. ...	Athkhel ...	20	1,218	812	1,448
13	Charaideo ...	Assam Tea Co. ...	Dhopabar ...	18	2,327	786	1,430
14	Chotaderai ...	Mesdames Hosack, Andrew and Reid.	Thaura Panidihing.	9½	314	Included in	Deraibari.
15	Delihi ...	Datta Brothers & Co. ...	Betbari ...	3	89	1	14
16	Deopani ...	Assam Co.	Athkhel ...	21	1,260	631	1,134
17	Deoriting ...	Rajabari Tea Co., Ld. ...	Thaura Panidihing.	15	272	Included in Rajabari.	306
18	Deraibari ...	Mesdames Hosack, Andrew and Reid.	Do. ...	9½	355	(d)217	(d)296
19	Dimubari ...	Do. ...	Do. ...	13	317	68	Included in Athabari.
20	Dipling ...	Disang Co., Ld. ...	Khalaighogora,	34	1,235	(e)681	1,298
21	Dolebagan ...	Assam Co.	Dhopabar ...	17	4,338	620	868
22	Domar Dallang ...	Do.	Khalaighogora,	24½	3,865	1,008	1,986

(a) Includes figure for Kaliapani.
(b) Includes figures for Kaliapani and Dimubari.
(c) Include figures for Barnapukhri.
(d) Include figures for Chotaderai.
(e) Includes figure for Teok.

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(contd.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION —(*contd.*)			Miles.			
23	Geleki ...	Assam Co.	Athkhel ...	18	4,118	1,367	3,136
24	Gosaibari ...	Srijut K. P. Chaliha, pleader.	Thaura Panidihing.	25	177	101	100
25	Halwating ...	Rajabari Tea Co., Ld. ...	Do.	5	268	Included in Rajabari.	
26	Do. ...	Amguri Tea Co., Ld. ...	Dopdar ...	21	2,026	521	929
27	Hingrajan ...	Dihing Co. ...	Khalaighogora...	30	522	(*f*)446	(*f*)698
28	Jabaka ...	Singlo Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	30	4,290	(*g*)1,010	(*g*)1,231
29	Kaliapani ...	Mesdames Hosack, Andrew and Reid.	Thaura Panidihing.	13	616	Included in Athabari.	
30	Kanubari ...	Grob Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	42½	926	Included in Sonari.	93
31	Kasomari ...	Dihing Co.	Khalaighogora...	29	473	Included in Hingrajan.	

32	Khangia ...	J. Hosack, Esq. ...	Thaura Panidihing.	15	1,226	217	378
33	Kharahat ...	Do. ...	Do.	11	359	240	466
34	Khumtai ...	Assam Co., ...	Khalaighogora...	33	3,537	554	1,107
35	Lakwa ...	Lakwa Tea Co., Ld. ...	Silakuti ...	22½	2,262	(*h*)1,299	1,153
36	Maduri ...	Messrs. Grindlay & Co. ...	Joktali ...	7	939	428	638
37	Mahkhuti ...	Assam Co.	Bakata ...	8½	1,970	519	924
38	Mekipur ...	Do.	Nazira ...	14½	7,881	1,438	3,410
39	Meruahola ...	Srijut Ananda Kumar Barua.	Dopdar ...	16	128	35	25
40	Mezenga and Ligripukhri.	Assam Co.	Nazira ...	13½	2,826	1,398	2,821
41	Mybella (Mathurapur.)	Singlo Tea Co., Ld. ...	Silakuti ...	20	3,549	872	1,649
42	Naharhabi ...	Messrs I. G. Scott, J. Mc Intosh and the estate of J. Brander.	Do. ...	19	2,634	832	1,861
43	Naphuk ...	Singlo Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	26	3,176	665	1,540
44	Rajabari ...	Lakwa Tea Co., Ld. ...	Silakuti ...	15½	355	Included in Lakwa.	668
45	Do. ...	Rajabari Tea Co. Ld. ...	Thaura Panidihing.	5	578	(*i*)528	(*j*)700
46	Rajmai ...	Rajmai Tea Co. ...	Thaura Panidihing.	9	4,120	805	1,873
47	Safrai ...	Singlo Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	23	2,813	853	1,854

(*f*) Include figures for Kasomari.
(*g*) Include figures for Banfera.
(*h*) Includes figures for Rajabari (No. 44) and Thirwalbari.
(*i*) Includes figures for Deoriting and Halwating.
(*j*) Includes figures for Halwating.

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(contd.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st, December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION —(*concld.*)			Miles.			
48	Santak ...	Assam Co. ...	Dhopabar ...	16½	2,877	859	1,461
49	Sepakati ...	Grob Tea Co., Ld. ...	Abhaipur ...	41	1,082	476	310
50	Sonari ...	Do. ...	Do. ...	28	582	(*a*)375	307
51	Taokak ...	Assam Co. ...	Abhaipur ...	33	5,452	950	1,550
52	Teok ...	Disang Co., Ld. ...	Do. ...	29	1,192	Included in Dipling.	516
53	Thirwalbari ...	Lakwa Tea Co., Ld. ...	Silakuti ...	25	1,869	Included in Lakwa.	436
54	Tingalibam ...	Tingalibam Tea Co. ..	Abhaipur ...	36½	1,923	570	652
55	Tiphuk ...	Naga Ali Tea Co., Ld. ...	Dopdar ...	17	2,023	558	1,419

	JORHAT SUBDIVISION.						
1	Balamajan ...	Munshi Baddiazmall Ahmad.	Gakhirkhoa ...	17	291	40	10
2	Bandersulia and Kheremia.	Tyroon Tea Co., Ld. ...	Kharikatia and Amguri.	18	1,085	532	490
3	Barhalla ...	Barhalla Assam Tea Co.	Amguri ...	24	2,202	522	731
4	Bokaholla ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Katani ...	11	1,194	595	691
5	Borsycotta and Bagchung.	Srijut Narayan Sarma Bez Barua.	Titabar ...	9 and 4 respectively.	380	180	131
6	Chungi ...	East India Tea Co., Ld....	Do.	15	1,800	322	295
7	Cinnamara ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Katani ...	4	4,212	865	1292
8	Daflating ...	East India Tea Co., Ld....	Amguri and Titabar.	16	2,760	602	799
9	Daklongia, Hatigarh, and Kaliapani	Messrs E. E. Lawrie and Morison.	Holongapar and Katani.	8	2,162	(b)1,225	1,348
10	Dallim ...	Hulunguri Tea Co., Ld....	Lahing ...	21	583	151	115
11	Debrapar ...	Kunan Devan Hills Produce and Co.	Nakachari ...	18	2,087	557	649
12	Dhekiajuli ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Katani ...	7	1,625	643	605
13	Duuli and Deoghoria.	Congdon Brothers. ...	Titabar and Amguri.	10 and 14 respectively.	1,141	480	371
14	Diha and Puranimati.	Estate of the late T. Kingsley.	Parbatia and Holongapar.	5	2.153	336	(c)969

(a) Includes figures for Baruasali and Kanubari.

(b) Includes figure for Toklai.

(c) Includes figure for Harusarai and Parbatia.

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(contd.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	JORHAT SUBDIVISION—(*contd.*)			Miles.			
15	Dihingapar and Goriahabi.	Messrs. J.S. Begg and R. J. Begg.	Nakachari ...	15	1,729	552	522
16	Disai ...	Grob Tea Co., Ld. ...	Do.	13	1,050	570	348
17	Gabru Parbat ...	Assam Co. ...	Lahing ...	21	777	462	644
18	Gariahabi ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Khangia ...	5	653	254	360
19	Gatonga ...	Moabund Tea Co. ...	Do.	9	3,643	782	1,217
20	Haticnungi ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Holongapar ...	6	493	429	470
21	Harusarai and Parbatia.	Estate of the late T. Kingsley.	Parbatia ...	5	948	514	Included in Diha and Puranmati.

22	Helikha ...	Scottish Assam Tea Co ...	Amguri ...	15	3,687	1,247	1.234
23	Hulunguri ...	Hulunguri Tea Co. ..	Nakachari ...	17	1.339	756	789
24	Hunwal, Serelia and Hatiguri.	Hunwal Tea Co., Ld. ...	Amguri ...	14	2 272	460	273
25	Jetukia and Jugibheta.	Executors of the late J. E Todd.	Holongapar ...	9	1,075	655	768
26	Kakadanga ...	Srijut D. C. Barua and Srijut Sarvananda Barkakati.	Khangia ...	12	333	160	164
27	Kamarbund ...	Moabund Tea Co. ...	Do.	8	960	411	596
28	Kathalguri, Cinnatali and Dhodarpar.	Salana Tea Co., Ld. ...	Nakachari ...	12	2,406	909	990
29	Khanikar ...	Hulunguri Tea Co. ...	Lahing (Gakhirkhoa)	20	205	188	160
30	Kharikatia and Rangajan.	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Katani ...	11	3,068	1,061	1,365
31	Latekujan (including Bahani, Tirual, Tippomia and Bichabari.)	Rai J. Barua Bahadur ...	Amguri and ... Kharikatia.	15	2,811	805	427
32	Madhapur ...	Srijut Bisturam Datta Barua.	Amguri ...	17	823	246	173
33	Mahima and Hatipara.	Mr. M. Begg, managing proprietor.	Titabar and Amguri.	16 and 14 respectively.	834	453	299
34	Mariani ...	Hunwal Tea Co., Ld ...	Amguri and Kharikatia.	12	2,653	608	863
35	Meleng and Solalbari.	Executors of the late J. E. Todd.	Holongapar ...	8	4,356	739	659

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(contd.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	JORHAT SUBDIVISION—(*concld.*)			Miles.			
36	Mezenga and Karsoli.	Scottish Assam Tea Co....	Titabar ...	11 and 18 respectively.	1,493	220	255
37	Moabund ...	Moabund Tea Co. ...	Khangia ...	12	1,553	934	1,372
38	Monmoy ...	Shek Khas Gaobura ...	Holongapar ...	11	216	85	47
39	Motijan ...	Shek Sahnur Ali ...	Amguri ...	13	100	65	78
40	Nagadholi ...	Hunwal Tea Co., Ld. ...	Do.	14	1,293	462	489
41	Nagajunka ...	Congdon Brother ...	Do.	13	563	280	234
42	Naginijan and Sotai.	Jhanzi Tea Association...	Nakachari ...	21	1,459	605	813

43	Nakachari and Bheluguri.	Kunan Devan Hills Produce and Co.	Nakachari ...	14 and 17 respectively.	6,056	1,163	1,307
44	Noabari ...	Mr. M. Begg ...	Katani ...	10	1,521	421	340
45	Panbari ...	Messrs. C. T. Jessop and H. Dupuis.	Thengal ...	11	907	337	329
46	Rajai & Lahing ...	Kunan Devan Hills Produce and Co. ...	Holongapar, Gakhirkhoa.	12 and 15 respectively.	3,390	860	1,006
47	Rowriya ...	Rai J. Barua Bahadur ...	Soraibahi ...	4	464	222	219
48	Saklatinga ...	Brahmaputra Tea Co. ...	Parbatia and Khangia.	12	1,656	669	892
49	Sangsoa ...	Moabund Tea Co. ...	Khangia ...	15	1,400	900	1,292
50	Samaguri ...	Do. ...	Do ...	8	851	731	857
51	Seleng and Boisahabi.	Jhanzi Tea Association...	Lahing ...	22	5,291	2,026	2,371
52	Soraipani ...	East India Tea Co., Ld....	Titabar ...	16	Not available.	285	328
53	Sycotta ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Katani ...	9	1,621	582	588
54	Teok and Namsisu	Kunan Devan Hills Produce and Co.	Gakhirkhoa ...	14 and 16 respectively.	1,185	558	667
55	Thengalbari ...	Srijut Bisturam Barua ...	Thengal ...	12	693	269	222
56	Titabar ...	Mr. Marcus Begg, managing proprietor.	Titabar and Amguri.	12	1,060	127	142
57	Toklai ...	Disai Parbatia Tea Co. ...	Garamur ...	2	296	Included in Daklongia.	134

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(contd.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	GOLAGHAT SUB-DIVISION.			Miles.			
1	Badulipar ...	Messrs. Pringle and Riddell Bros.	Rangamati ...	14	1,830	545	849
2	Barjan ...	Barjan Tea Co., Ld. ...	Dakhinhengra.	8	1,168	600	580
3	Barkathani ...	The Kingsley Golaghat Assam Tea Co., Ld.	Gurjogania ...	7	320	(*a*) 955	(*a*) 862
4	Barsapari ...	Mr. T. Elliot ...	Namdayang ...	22	1,790	468	582
5	Barting ...	Srijut Guru Prasad Kakoti.	Dakhinhengra.	6½	377	107	120
6	Betiani ...	The Kingsley Golaghat Assam Tea Co., Ld.	Dhekial ...	7	378	Included in	Barkathani.
7	Bhulukiting ...	Do.	Dakhinhengra...	5½	542	Do.	Do.

8	Bihora ...	Rajmai Tea Co. ...	Namdayang ...	21	1,174	493	680
9	Boun ...	Messrs. Pringle & Riddell Bros. ...	Rangamati ...	15½	433	249	314
10	Chotajan ...	Mr. H. J. Lawrie ...	Dakhinhengra.	9½	899	335	314
11	Dakhinhengra ...	Assam United Tea Co., Ld.	Do.	10	1,855	410	608
12	Dholaguri ...	J. K. Rutter, Esq., & Dr. S. O. Bishop ...	Marangi ...	10	1,451	340	271
13	Difflu ...	Amalgamated Tea Estates Co. Ld.	Namdayang ...	30	590	336	372
14	Dering including Haloating ...	Do.	Do.	38	559	203	122
15	Doiang ...	Messrs. H. T. Dupuis & H. Vaughan Cowley.	Ghiladhari ...	7	1,306	307	330
16	Dolonjan ...	Srijut Ghanasyam Barua, B. L., & Gunindranath Barua.	Do.	8	1,004	140	33
17	Doygrun ...	Amalgamated Tea Estates Co., Ld.	Marangi ...	10	2,496	Included in	Lattakujan.
18	Duria ...	Duria Tea Co., Ld. ...	Khumtai ...	10	2,383	785	1,062
19	Ekrajan ...	Mr. Riddell ...	Namdayang ...	25½	936	225	120
20	Farkating ...	Looksan Tea Co. and Messrs. R. B. Pringle and J. S. Fraser.	Athgaon ...	5	449	Included in	Barkathani.

(*a*) Includes figures for Betiani, Farkating, Garanga North, Golaghat and Benguakhoa, Pandumoni and Bhulukiting.

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(contd.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	GOLAGHAT SUB-DIVISION—(*contd*).			Miles.			
21	Garanga (Rangajan).	Looksan Tea Co. and Messrs. R. B. Pringle and J. S. Fraser.	Marangi ...	7	421	Included in Rangajan.	100
22	Garanga North ..	The Kingsley Assam Tea Co., Ld.	Dhekial ...	6	629	Included in	Barkathani.
23	Garanga South ...	Looksan Tea Co. and Messrs R. B. Pringle and J. S. Fraser.	Ghiladhari ...	8	588	Included in	Wokha.
24	Gariajan ...	Messrs. Pringle and Riddell Bros.	Rangamati ...	12	665	246	282
25	Ghiladhari ...	Assam United Tea Co., Ld.	Ghiladhari ...	10	2,552	142	210
26	Golaghat including Benguakhoa.	The Kingsley Golaghat Assam Tea Co., Ld.	Maukhoa ...	2	1,105	Included in	Barkathani.

27	Halmira ...	Mr. G. V. Burrowes, Miss Nolan, Estates of late Greaves and Edward.	Dhekial ...	1½	2,068	477	360
28	Halmiramukh ...	Mr. C. E. Peterson ...	Do.	3	102	90	77
29	Hatikhuli ...	Amalgamated Tea Estate Co., Ld.	Namdayang ...	44	911	624	669
30	Hautley ...	Executors of the late Mr. James, A R. Stevenson and Mr. E. W. Cambridge.	Khumtai ...	7	2,163	550	675
31	Khamtai ...	Messrs. Pringle, Stevenson and others.	Khumtai ...	13	3,417	877	1,099
32	Kopohuting ...	Munshi Muhammad Ali	Kacharihat ...	9	232	Returns not	submitted.
33	Khuthari ...	Mr. A. I. Brown ...	Duarbagri ...	50	52		
34	Latabari ...	Amalgamated Tea Estates Co., Ld.	Namdayang ...	30	1,311	364	329
35	Lattakujan including Panka.	Do.	Marangi ...	14	1,677	(a)1,979	(a)2,076
36	Mahima ...	Mr S. H. Shaw and F. H. Fowler.	Gurjogania ...	10	1,330	540	480
37	Makrang ...	The Golaghat Assam Tea Co., Ld.	Ghiladhari ...	12	1,321	371	433
38	Michamara including Kurunating.	Brahmaputra Tea Co., Ld.	Michamara ...	12	2,173	959	1,425

(a) Include figures for Doygrun.

STATEMENT A.

List of tea gardens—(concld.)

Serial number.	Name of garden.	Name of owner or company to which it belongs.	Mauza in which situated.	Approximate distance by road from subdivisional headquarters.	Area in acres on December 31st, 1903.	Area in acres under plant, both mature and immature, on 31st December 1903.	Labour force on December 31st, 1903.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	GOLAGHAT SUB-DIVISION—(*concld.*)			Miles.			
39	Nagara ...	Messrs. Adam and Todd Naylor.	Ghiladhari ...	7	1,389	417	398
40	Naharani ...	Srijut Radhanath Neog, managing proprietor.	Naharani ...	16	178	75	24
41	Naharjan ...	Messrs. Pringle and Forbes.	Namdayang ...	30	1,514	505	480
42	Neghereting ...	Brahmaputra Tea Co., Ld.	Dergaon ...	16	2,726	1,480	2,162
43	Numaligarh ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld ...	Namdayang ...	19	2,441	600	816
44	Oating including Balijan.	Do.	Ghiladhari ...	5	760	216	377
45	Padumoni ...	The Kingsley Golaghat Assam Tea Co., Ld.	Maukhoa and Dhekial.	4	214	Included in	Barkathani.
46	Rangagora ...	Jorhat Tea Co., Ld. ...	Rangamati ...	16	1,470	464	579

47	Rangajan including Chariakhat and Thorajan.	Looksan Tea Co. and Messrs R. B. Pringle and J. S Fraser.	Marangi ...	5	4,934	(a)1,015	732
48	Rangamati including Rangoliting.	Brahmaputra Tea Co., Ld	Rangamati, Michamara.	13	1,877	912	1,479
49	Simphora ...	Borhola Tea Co., Ld. ...	Ghiladhari ...	14	120	38	55
50	Sokeyting ...	Assam United Tea Co., Ld.	Dakhinhengra ...	9	1.212	118	161
51	Wokha ...	Looksan Tea Co. and Messrs. R. B. Pringle and J. S. Fraser.	Ghiladhari ...	8	2,574	(b) 560	(b)580

(a) Includes figure for Garanga (No. 21).
(b) Include figures for Garang South.

STATEMENT B.

List of post offices.

Name of post office.	Name of mauza or tahsil in which situated.	Name of post office.	Name of mauza or tahsil in which situated.
Ahataguri ...	Ahataguri mauza.	Golaghat ...	Golaghat town.
Amguri* ...	Namtidol tahsil.	Jhanzi ...	Namtidol tahsil.
Badulipar* ...	Rangamati mauza.	Jhanzimukh ...	Chaokhat mauza.
Barjan ...	Athgaon tahsil.	Jorhat ...	Jorhat town.
Barpathar ...	Barpathar mauza.	Kajiranga ...	Namdayang mauza.
Baruagaon ...	Athgaon tahsil.	Kakilamukh* ...	Hezari mauza.
Bihubar ...	Athkhel mauza.	Kamalabari ...	Salmara mauza.
Bokakhat* ...	Namdayang mauza.	Kamarbandhali ...	Athgaon tahsil.
Chaokhat ...	Chaokhat mauza.	Lakwa* ...	Silakuti mauza.
Cinnamara* ...	Jorhat tahsil.	Letekujan* ...	Golaghat tahsil.
Dergaon ...	Michamara mauza.	Mahima* ...	Gurjogania mauza.
Dhansirimukh* ...	Namdayang mauza.	Mahkhuti ...	Bakata mauza.
Dikhomukh ...	Sibsagar tahsil.	Maran* ...	Khalai ghogora mauza.
Dimapur ...	Dimapur mauza.	Mariani* ...	Jorhat tahsil.
Disangmukh* ...	Sibsagar tahsil.	Meleng* ...	Chaokhat mauza.
Ganakpukhuri ...	Gurjogania mauza.	Moabund* ...	Khangia mauza.
Gatonga* ...	Khangia mauza.	Nakachari* ...	Nakachari mauza.
Gaurisagar ...	Namtidol tahsil.	Namtidol ...	Namtidol tahsil.
Geleki ...	Athkhel mauza.	Nazira* ...	Nazira mauza.

Note.—The names marked with an asterisk are combined post and telegraph offices. There are also departmental telegraph offices at Dimapur, Jorhat, and Golaghat.

STATEMENT B.

List of post offices—(concld.)

Name of post office.	Name of mauza or tahsil in which situated.	Name of post office.	Name of mauza or tahsil in which situated.
Neghereting* ...	Dergaon mauza.	Sibsagar* ...	Sibsagar town.
Numaligarh* ...	Namdayang mauza	Sokhlatanga ...	Khangia mauza.
Oating ...	Athgaon tahsil.	Sonari* ...	Abhaipur mauza.
Rajmai* ...	Thaura Panidihing mauza	Teok ...	Teok mauza.
Rangajan* ...	Jorhat tahsil.	Tiphuk ...	Namtidol tahsil.
Safrai* ...	Abhaipur mauza.	Titabar* ...	Jorhat tahsil.
Seleng* ...	Lahing mauza.		

Note.—The names marked with an asterisk are combined post and telegraph offices. There are also departmental telegraph offices at Dimapur, Jorhat and Golaghat.

STATEMENT C.

List of markets.

Tahsil or mauza.	Place at which market held.	Tahsil or mauza.	Place at which market held.
Sibsagar Subdivision.		Joktali mauza...	Athabari garden.
Abhaipur mauza	Abhaipur.	Namtidol tahsil	Dopdar.
	Sapaketi. Held every Monday.		
	Sonari.		Kukurachoa.
Silakuti " ...	Lakwa.		Naragaon.
Dhopabar " ...	Charaideo.		
	Mathurapur.	Sibsagar tahsil...	Sibsagar town (Municipal bazar). Held daily.
	Santak.		
Athkel " ...	Athkhel.		
	Geleki.	Thaura Panidihing mauza.	Rajmai.
Nazira " ...	Mekipur.	*Jorhat Subdivision.*	
	Mezenga.	Gakhirkhoa mauza.	Teok.
	Nazira Chak bazar. Held daily.	Lahing "	Seleng.

Where not otherwise specified these markets are always held on Sunday.

STATEMENT C.

List of markets—(concld.)

Tahsil or mauza.	Place at which market held.	Tahsil or mauza.	Place at which market held.
Jorhat—(concld.)			
Nakachari mauza	Dobrapar.	Golaghat tahsil	Bheloatar.
	Tirual. Held every Wednesday.		Golaghat. Held every Wednesday and Sunday.
Holongapar mauza.	Meleng.		Letekujan. Held every Friday.
Jorhat tahsil ...	Jorhat Chak bazar. Held daily.		Panikora.
	Rangajan. Held every Wednesday.	Gurjogania mauza.	Barkhathani garden. Held every Tuesday.
Amguri and Kharikatia mauzas.	Barhalla.		
	Hilikha.	Dergaon ,, ...	Neghereting. Held daily.
Titabar ,, ...	Titabar.		Neghereting Garhali side.
Garamur ,, ...	Cinnamara.		
Katani ,, ...	Mariani.	Rangamati ,, ...	Bholaguri.
Khangia ,, ...	Gatonga.		Rangagora.
	Moabund.		Rangamati.
Golaghat Subdivision.		Namdayang ,, ...	Hatikhali.
Dimapur mauza...	Dimapur.		Ikarajan.
Athgaon tahsil...	Barkathani. Held every Tuesday.		Naharjan.
	Dakhinhengra Ghiladhari.		Numaligar Biharahat
	Halikihat in village Kharjan. Held every Wednesday and Sunday.		
	Oating.		

Where not otherwise specified these markets are always held on Sunday.

STATEMENT D.

List of villages containing three or more permanent shops.

Tahsil or mauza.	Village.	No. of permanent shops.	Tahsil or mauza.	Village.	No. of permanent shops.
Sibsagar Sub-division. Abhaipur mauza.	Naphuk ...	3	Namtidol tahsil.	Abhaipuria ...	3
	Rangapahar ...	4		Bangaligari ...	5
	Sonari (North) ...	7		Chamdar ...	3
	Do. (South) ...	9		Lunpuria ...	3
Silakui mauza	Ramun ...	3		Namta Bangali ...	3
Dhopabar ,, ...	Barduar ...	3		Parbatia ...	3
	Belengbari ...	3	Sibsagar tahsil	Alichija ...	3
	Bogdai ...	3	*Jorhat Sub-division.* Nakachari mauza.	Cinnatoli ...	4
	Mathurapur ...	3		Mautjuli ...	5
Athkel ,, ...	Dolasoria Bamgaon.	3		Nagadora Balimara	4
	Gohaingaon ...	5		Naginijan ...	4
Nazira ,, ...	Nazira (in the land of the Assam Co.)	70		Tirual hatkhola ...	10
Joktali ,, ...	Bartala ...	8	Salmara mauza	Auniati ...	3
			Charigaon ,,	Chengeligaon ...	3
	Borakhoa ...	3	Parbatia ,,	Bhatmora ...	3
	Mechaghar Gohaingaon.	3		Charingia	3
	Nazira bazar ...	28		Matigaon (Old) ...	4
Hachara ,, ...	Chunpora gohain	3	Jorhat tahsil	Mahabandhagaon	6
	Kujibali ...	3		Nagarmahal ...	93
			Kharikatia and Amguri mauzas	Nangolgaon ...	3

STATEMENT D.

List of villages containing three or more permanent shops—(concld.)

Tahsil or mauza.	Village.	No. of permanent shops.	Tahsil or mauza.	Village.	No. of permanent shops.
Golaghat Subdivision.					
Rengma mauza	Bhitarkaliani ...	3	Michamara mauza.	Dadhoragaon ...	3
				Dalijan ...	5
Barpathar mauza.	Barpathar ...	5		Rojabahar ...	3
Dimapur mauza.	Dimapur ...	36	Namdayang mauza.	Bilatia ...	3
				Garmur ...	3
Athgaon tahsil.	Barahigaon ...	3		Khaligaon ...	3
	Fechuyal ...	3		Mahmaiki ...	3
	Gohaingaon ...	3		Rowroar ...	6
	Gorigaon ...	3			
	Kacharihat ...	3			
	Tirual ...	3			
Golaghat tahsil	Dhekial ...	3			
	Habisowa ...	3			
	Teliagaon ...	3			
Naharani mauza.	Dhodangaria ...	4			
Dergaon mauza	Dergaon ...	4			
	Jelehuagaon ...	3			
	Kumargaon ...	3			

TABLE I.

Average maximum and minimum temperatures registered at Sibsagar town.

	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Year.
Maximum temperature ...	70°·1	73°·1	79°·1	82°·5	85°·9	89°·3	90°·0	89°·2	88°·1	84°·8	78°·3	71°·5	81°·8
Minimum temperature ...	49°·5	53°·3	60°·0	66°·5	71°·7	76°·4	77°·9	77°·7	76°·2	70°·8	59°·6	50°·7	65°·8

TABLE II.

Rainfall.

The number of years for which the average is calculated is shown below the name of each station.

Months.		Average rainfall in inches.					
		Dimapur (8 years).	Golaghat (30 years).	Jorhat (29 years).	Nazira (25 years).	Sibsagar (45 years).	Sonari (9 years).
January	...	0·56	1·01	0·93	1·27	1·14	1·40
February	...	1·61	1·56	1·41	2·27	2·16	2·58
March	...	2·91	4·43	4·28	4·81	4·74	6·44
April	...	4·64	8·39	8·36	9·27	9·88	9·80
May	...	6·05	10·44	9·62	9·97	11·47	10·60
June	...	8·96	12·11	11·52	13·43	14·14	12·58
July	...	10·38	15·16	15·24	15·08	15·89	18·37
August	...	9·75	13·60	14·32	16·09	16·29	16·38
September	...	9·01	10·08	9·23	10·46	11·77	10·60
October	...	4·42	4·03	4·04	5·11	5·17	4·71
November	...	0·78	0·53	0·54	0·91	1·11	0·85
December	...	0·47	0·59	0·60	0·66	0·59	0·68
Total of year	...	59·54	81·93	80·09	89·33	94·35	94·99

TABLE III.

Distribution of population.

Tahsil or mauza.	Population in 1901.	Population in 1891.	Difference.	Area in square miles.	Population per square mile.	Number of persons censused on tea gardens.
Sibsagar Subdivision—						
Sibsagar tahsil ...	45,612	38,583	+7,029	147·75	308	1,421
Namtidol tahsil ...	58,145	54,365*	+3,780	159·93	364	11,443
Joktali mauza ...	8,681	7,426	+1,255	22·27	390	755
Athkhel " ...	15,268	Not known.	+15,268	61·18	250	7,745
Abhaipur " ...	21,632	15,161	+6,471	219·95	98	10,983
Khalaighogora " ...	14,635	11,136	+3,499	114·16	128	5,881
Silakuti " ...	13,657	10,092	+3,565	54·13	252	3,384
Dhopabar " ...	11,673	9,077	+2,596	43·18	270	6,089
Thaura Panidihing "	14,417	10,391†	+4,026	153·59	93	4,348
Hachara "	4,834	4,073	+761	13·77	351	...
Geleki "	3,210	...	+3,210	...	...	3,210
Jorhat Subdivision—						
Jorhat tahsil ...	63,654	52,360	+11,294	144·19	441	22,603
Lahing mauza ...	14,017	11,799	+2,218	76·45	183	5,281
Gakhirkhoa " ...	5,350	2,896‡	+2,454	31·64	169	2,936

* The Jokaisukh mauza (population 2,509 in 1891) has been transferred from the Namtidol to the Sibsagar tahsil, the figures for 1891 have been corrected. The population of Joktali mauza in 1891 (7,426) has also been deducted, as the mauza no longer forms part of the tahsil. The population of the Athkhel mauza should also have been deducted, but unfortunately it is not known.

† The Kampur mauza (population 9,341 in 1891) has been transferred to the Sibsagar tahsil. The figures for 1891 have been corrected.

‡ Portions of this mauza, containing in 1891, 2,877 and 1,557 persons have since been transferred to the Lahing and Nakachari mauzas respectively. The figures for 1891 have been corrected.

TABLE III.

Distribution of population—(contd.)

Tahsil or mauza.	Population in 1901.	Population in 1891.	Difference.	Area in square miles.	Population per square mile.	Number of persons censused on tea gardens.
Jorhat Subdivision—(concld.)						
Nakachari mauza ...	11,078	8,805	+2,273	24·35	454	3,747
Churamani " ...	7,832	6,626	+1,206	26·40	296	...
Chaokhat " ...	16,853	14,976	+1,877	72·10	233	...
Holongapar " ...	17,240	12,151	+5,089	61·45	280	8,723
Kotahabahoni and Charigaon mauzas.	12,200	12,046	+154	19·64	621	...
Hezari " ...	7,413	6,699	+714	37·40	198	...
Baligaon " ...	8,111	6,675	+1,436	30·90	262	...
Parbatia " ...	5,312	4,764	+548	24·50	216	882
Amguri and Kharikatia mauzas.	23,621	16,266	+7,355	118·30	199	10,950
Salmara " ...	26,456	24,941	+1,515	349·50	75	...
Golaghat Subdivision—						
Golaghat tahsil ...	38,515	31,232	+7,283	178·83	215	11,546
Athgaon tahsil ...	33,488	29,422	+4,066	150·98	221	6,106
Michamara mauza ...	19,040	16,664	+2,376	66·05	288	6,069
Ahataguri " ...	8,594	7,636	+958	135·60	63	...
Rangamati " ...	13,016	9,036	+3,980	102·20	127	5,617
Namdayang " ...	13,135	9,762	+3,373	221·60	59	6,499
Nahrani " ...	4,175	4,077	+98	12·63	330	64

TABLE III.

Distribution of population—(concld.)

Tahsil or mauza.	Population in 1901	Population in 1891.	Difference.	Area in square miles.	Population per square mile.	Number of persons censused on tea gardens.
Golaghat Subdivision—(concld.)						
Gurjogania mauza ...	9,731	7,857	+1,874	27·02	360	1,250
Barpathar* " ...	3,200	1,820	+1,380	...	...	...
Dimapur " ...	566	303	+263	...	...	...
Duardisa " ...	3,139	2,171	+968	...	...	...
Barjan " ...	2,199	...	+2,199	...	...	...
East Rengma " ...	5,231	7,650	−2,419	...	...	...
West Rengma " ..	10,363	8,603	+1,760	...	...	...
Duar Bagari† " ...	2,676	2,838	−162	...	...	...
Total district ...	597,969	480,659	+117,310	4,996·00‡	120	147,532

* Barpathar and the following five mauzas have been transferred from the Naga Hills since 1891; the areas are not available.

† This mauza was transferred from Nowgong; the area is not available.

‡ The area of the district was furnished by the Assistant Surveyer-General and does not tally with the sum total of the areas of mauzas and tahsils as the latter figures were obtained from the District Officer.

TABLE IV.

General statistics of population.

Particulars.	Sibsagar Subdivision. Males.	Sibsagar Subdivision. Females.	Jorhat Subdivision. Males.	Jorhat Subdivision. Females.	Golaghat Subdivision. Males.	Golaghat Subdivision. Females.	Total District. Persons.	Total District. Males.	Total District. Females.
Population. 1901 ...	113,943	97,866	115,079	104,058	87,963	79,060	597,969	316,985	280,984
Population. 1891 ...	84,243	76,061	95,575	85,577	72,869	66,334	480,659	252,687	227,972
Population. 1881 ...	129,166		147,164		115,215		392.545	206,329	186,216
Population. 1872 ...	54,304	48,943	61,104	55,752	50,137	47,559	317,799	+165,545	152,254
Variation. 1891—1901	+29,700	+21,805	+19,504	+18,481	+15,094	+12,726	+117,310	+64,298	+53,012
Variation. 1881—1891	+31,138		+33,988		+22,988		+88,114	+46,358	+41,756
Variation. 1872—1881	+25,919		+30,308		+18,519		+74,746	+40,784	+33,962
1901 Religion— Total Hindus ...	105,093	91,825	106,728	97,197	68,099	60,538	529,480	279,920	249,560
Mahapurushias ...	41,062	38,142	41,928	39,581	10,430	9,853	180,996	93,420	87,576

Other Vaishnavas.	18,449	16,442	25,831	23,412	11,99	10,509	106,642	56,279	50,363
Saktists ...	27,519	22,579	24,048	21,947	17,669	15,877	129,639	69,236	60,403
Sivaites ...	1,691	3,481	1,077	643	686	512	8,090	3,454	4,636
Muhammadans.	6,362	4,970	3,657	3,016	3,788	3,085	24,878	13,807	11,071
Animistic ...	1,657	449	3,625	3,001	15,506	14,965	39,203	20,788	18,415
Total Christians...	523	399	578	488	283	218	2,489	1,384	1,105
Baptist ...	309	255	331	229	38	9	1,171	678	493
Minor denominations.	104	108	138	201	136	130	817	378	439
Other religions ...	308	223	491	356	287	254	1,919	1,086	833
CIVIL CONDITION—									
Unmarried ...	58,386	44,012	63,634	48,120	47,962	36,126	298,240	169,982	128,258
Married ...	47,810	41,582	43,567	42,662	34,378	33,336	243,335	125,755	117,580
Widowed ...	7,747	12,272	7,878	13,276	5,623	9,598	56,394	21,248	35,146
LITERACY—Literate in Assamese.	3,975	210	5,545	262	3,781	54	13,827	13,301	526
Literate in English.	1,382	44	1,099	287	737	46	3,595	3,218	377
Illiterate ...	107,552	97,514	107,433	103,327	82,806	78,944	577,576	297,791	279,785
LANGUAGES SPOKEN—									
Assamese ...	67,909	59,451	73,181	66,895	45,979	41,569	354,984	187,069	167,915
Eastern Hindi	10,791	7,591	5,262	5,260	5,429	4,360	38,693	21,482	17,211
Bengali ...	23,282	21,804	25,613	22,554	11,653	10,382	115,288	60,548	54,740
Kandhi or Khond	1,159	1,091	364	402	3,761	3,558	10,335	5,284	5,051
Santali ...	1,740	1,266	1,852	1,667	1,556	1,498	9,579	5,148	4,431
Miri ...	1,147	1,927	3,654	3,382	2,244	2,398	14,752	7,045	7,707
Mikir ...	...	...	...	...	11,763	11,040	22,803	11,763	11,040

Note.—Since 1891 Dimapur, Barpathar, Eastern and Western Rengma and Duardisa mauzas have been transferred from the Naga Hills and mauza Duar Bagari from Nowgong to Golaghat subdivision. The figures for 1891, 1881 and 1872 have been corrected accordingly.

TABLE V.

Birth place, race, caste and occupation.

	Sibsagar Subdivision.		Jorhat Subdivision.		Golaghat Subdivision.		Total District.		
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Birth place.									
Born in the district ...	73,840	69,108	84,348	78,600	55,989	52,441	414,326	214,177	200,149
" " other parts of Province.	5,294	1,388	2,452	496	12,206	10,195	32,031	19,952	12,079
" " Chota Nagpur	14,972	12.808	14,439	13,600	10,479	9,554	75,852	39,890	35,962
" " other parts of Bengal.	8,848	6,727	6,960	6,036	5,543	4,103	38,217	21,351	16,866
" " United Provinces.	3,918	2,138	671	418	1,107	613	8,865	5,696	3,169
" " Central Provinces.	4,298	3,866	3,915	3,750	965	1,365	18,159	9,178	8,981
" " Nepal ...	235	85	444	130	527	235	1,656	1,206	450
" Elsewhere ...	2,538	1,746	1,850	1,028	1,147	554	8,863	5,535	3,328
Race and caste.									
Ahom	36,723	35,212	13,566	12,840	6,611	6,167	111,119	56,900	54,219
Bauri	1,900	1,981	1,599	1,579	975	1,177	9,211	4,474	4,737
Bhuiya	2,622	2,336	3,376	3,031	3,022	2,457	16,844	9,020	7,824
Bhumij	1,920	1,441	1,866	1,704	1,030	807	8,768	4,816	3,952

Boria	156	86	1,513	1,404	1,078	1,111	5,348	2,747	2,601
Brahman	1,752	1,111	4,027	3.267	2,311	1.970	14,438	8,090	6,348
Chutiya	5,377	5,322	13,541	13,029	10,139	9,622	57,030	29,057	27,973
Eurasian	8	3	5	2	1	1	20	14	6
European (*a*) ...	107	27	78	23	80	41	356	265	91
Ganak	141	141	655	665	236	159	1.997	1,032	965
Ghatwal	1,824	1,731	1,633	1,786	1,290	1,250	9,514	4,747	4,767
Goala	1.451	1,135	1,043	830	486	517	5.462	2,980	2,482
Jugi	91	51	2,797	2,342	536	474	6,291	3,424	2,867
Kachari	3.086	1,263	4,720	3,768	2,230	1,551	16,618	10.036	6,582
Kalita	3,546	2,531	10,638	9,458	5,606	4,848	36.627	19,790	16,837
Kamar	1,525	1,495	1,551	1,478	1,144	1,093	8,286	4,220	4,066
Kayastha	868	772	611	539	599	402	3,791	2.078	1,713
Kewat and Kaibartta ..	3,396	2,617	6,217	5,501	4.411	4,143	26,285	14,024	12,261
Koch and Rajbansi ...	3.629	3,071	6,721	6,081	4,354	3,875	27.731	14,704	13,027
Mikir	..	1	1	...	11,686	11,223	22.911	11,687	11.224
Miri	2,843	1,939	3,866	3,718	2,663	2,603	17.632	9,372	8,260
Munda	3,100	2,757	2,815	2,441	2.633	2,412	16,159	8,548	7,611
Nadiyal	2,393	2,495	5,819	5,565	3,603	3,174	23,049	11,815	11,234
Santal	3,336	2,982	4,620	4,308	2,352	1,700	19,298	10,308	8,990
Turi	996	967	1,049	1,035	801	809	5,657	2,846	2,811
OCCUPATION.									
Workers	...	...	...	...	...	...	378,646	211,920	166,726
Dependents ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	219,323	...	...
Total supported :—									
Land-holders ...	68,919	62,379	67,901	64,116	57,638	54,553	375.506	194,458	181,048
Tenants	4,041	2,976	5,589	5,016	2,145	1,695	21,462	11,775	9,687
Garden labourers ...	27,153	25,665	28,060	26,586	18.540	18.002	144,006	73.753	70,253
Fishermen ...	649	466	1,951	1,484	872	731	6,153	3,472	2,681
General labourers ..	2,112	801	413	176	301	251	4,054	2,826	1,228

(*a*) Includes allied races.

TABLE VI.

Vital statistics.

Year.	Population under registration in 1901.	Ratio of births per mille.	Ratio of deaths per mille.	RATIO OF DEATHS PER MILLE FROM			
				Cholera.	Small-pox.	Fever.	Bowel complaints.
1901	597,969	26·34	21·71	0·66	0·11	12·73	3·90
1902	Do.	24·46	18·14	0·89	0·03	9·95	3·32
1903	Do.	27·81	18·23	1·21	0·05	9·88	3·17
1904	Do.	29·74	21·11	0·65	0·36	11·46	3·90
1905							
1906							
1907							
1908							
1909							
1910							
1911							
1912							

TABLE

Crop

Particulars.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Total cropped area	509,716	526,131	537,457	536,833
Rice	316,278	327,472	340,739	345,634
Mustard	18,070	19,575	19,537	20,522
Sugarcane	6,449	8,031	8,031	7,412
Pulses	16,338	15,985	14,047	16,108
All other crops	152,581	155,068	155,103	147,157
TEA.				
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION.—	*1901*	*1902*	*1903*	*1904*
Number of gardens ...	58	55	56	56
Area in acres	91,001	92,415	98,002	97,444
Area in acres under plant ...	28,645	27,732	27,384	28,076
Outtern in lbs.	9,389,797	9,374,395	9,323,430	11,183,233
Labour force	33,436	31,518	33,960	33,329
Labourers including dependents imported during the year.*	2,219	...	2,707	1,413

* Figures for 1903 and subsequent years relate

VII.

statistics.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
1905	*1906*	*1907*	*1908*	*1909*	*1910*	*1911*	*1912*

to the period from 1st July to 30th June.

TABLE

Crop

Particulars.	1901.	1902	1903.	1904.
TEA.				
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Number of gardens	58	58	57	56
Area in acres	90,978	80,085	80,248	82,186
Area in acres under plant ...	30,420	31,167	31,022	30,851
Outturn in lbs.	10,241,523	9,805,623	10,743,570	11,172,933
Labour force	36,960	37,606	38,513	36,849
Labourers including dependents imported during the year.*	2,740	...	1,443	2,051
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Number of gardens	48	46	46	47
Area in acres	62,674	62,500	60,037	58,179
Area in acres under plant ...	20,252	20,453	20,117	20,324
Outturn in lbs.	7,168,606	7,142,400	7,803,727	8,025,512
Labour force	25,558	24,621	24,496	23,883
Labourers including dependents imported during the year.*	1,387	...	1,770	1,187
TOTAL DISTRICT.				
Number of gardens	164	159	159	159
Area in acres	244,653	235,000	238,287	237,809
Area in acres under plant { held by Europeans	76,890	76,802	75,967	76,514
" " natives ...	2,427	2,550	2,556	2,737
Outturn in lbs.	26,800,000	26,322,000	27,871,000	30,382,000
Labour force	95,954	93,745	96,969	94,061
Labourers including dependents imported during the year.*	6,346	...	5,920	4,651

*Figures for 1903 and subsequent years relate to the period from

VII.

statistics.

1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.

1st July to 30th June.

TABLE

Reserved

Name of reserve.		Area in square miles.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
GOLAGHAT RANGE.	Mikir Hills ...	81	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	6	223
	Kalioni ...	81	143	80	32	460
	Upper Daigurung	8	*Nil.*	1	*Nil.*	*Nil.*
	Lower Do. ...	8	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	1	*Nil.*
	Nambar ...	387	1,695	7,455	7,793	4,146
	Diphu ...	66	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	274	700
	Rengma ...	54	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	*Nil.*
	Doiang ...	95	178	259	476	386
JORHAT RANGE.	Disai ...	11	1,178	2,656	3,460	652
	Holongapar ...	8	66	301	613	166
	Disai valley ...	63	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	1,196	*Nil.*
SIBSAGAR RANGE.	Abhaipur ...	26	*Nil.*	*Nil.*	94	*Nil.*
	Sola ...	3	47	225	365	5
	Panidihingia ...	30	338	924	688	529
	Dirai ...	18	132	43	184	50

VIII.

forests.

CEIPTS.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.

TABLE

Outturn of timber and fuel and

[The figures include details for the Disai Valley Reserve

Details.		1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
Reserved forests					
Area	sq. miles ...	876	939	939	939
Outturn (Govt. and purchasers only).					
Timber	c. ft. ...	62,679	170,047	150,972	55,721
Fuel	c. ft. ...	400	192	100	...
Unclassed State forests.					
Area	sq. miles ...	2,801	2,867	2,839	3,091
Outturn (Govt. and purchasers only).					
Timber	c. ft. ...	161,681	97,115	94,670	60,430
Fuel	c. ft. ...	92,362	137,794	55,732	51,649
Rubber	Rs. ...	1,882	110	241	691
Forest receipts	Rs. ...	31,656	33,490	35,235	22,988
Forest expenditure	Rs. ...	20,949	21,214	28,597	31,189
Surplus or deficit	Rs. ...	+10,707	+12,276	+6,638	−8,201

IX.

value of minor forest produce.

in the Naga Hills which is worked from Sibsagar.]

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.

TABLE X.

Prices of food staples in seers obtainable per rupee at selected marts.

		Sibsagar.			Jorhat.			Golaghat.		
Year	Period	Common rice	Salt.	Matikalai.	Common rice.	Salt.	Matikalai.	Common rice.	Salt.	Matikalai.
1880	2nd week of February ...	14	6½	10	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Do. do. of August ...	14	6½	10	...	...	...	...	...	...
1890	Do. do. of February ...	20	8	15	16	8	16	16	8	13
	Do. do. of August ...	13	8	13	12½	8½	15	13	8	13
1900	Do. do. of February ...	13	9	13	12	9	13	12	8	12
	Do. do. of August ...	$10\frac{9}{16}$	8	$10\frac{9}{16}$	11	9	10½	10	8	11
1901	Do. do. of February ...	11½	8⅞	12	9	9	11	12	8	11
	Do. do. of August ...	8	8½	11	8	8	11	8	8	8
1902	Do. do. of February ...	13	8¾	11	10½	8	12	12	8	11
	Do. do. of August ...	8	8	12¼	8	9	12	8	8	11
1903	Do. do. of February ...	13	9	11	10	9	11	12	8	10¼
	Do. do. of August ...	11	10½	12	9	11	11	12	10¾	11
1904	Do. do. of February ...	14	11	13	13	11	11¾	14	10	11
	Do. do. of August ...	13	11	13	12	11	12	12	10½	11
1905	Do. do. of February ...	16	11	13½	13½	11	13	15	10½	11
	Do. do. of August ...									
1906	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of August ...									
1907	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of August ...									
1908	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of August ...									
1909	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of August ...									
1910	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of August ...									
1911	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of A gust ...									
1912	Do. do. of February ...									
	Do. do. of August ...									

TABLE

Statistics of Criminal and

Heads of crime.	1902.		1903.		1904.	
	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION.						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(i) Rioting or unlawful assembly, sections 143—153, 157, 158 and 159	16	13	11	9	12	12
(ii) Other offences against the State, public tranquillity, &c.	5	3	5	4	4	4
(iii) Murder, attempt at murder, and culpable homicide, sections 302—304, 307, 308 and 396.	4	3	6	5	7	5
(iv) Grievous hurt and hurt by dangerous weapon, sections 324—326, 329, 331, 333 and 335.	15	9	18	11	21	13
(v) Serious criminal force, sections 353, 354, 356 and 357.	4	3	5	3	3	3
(vi) Other serious offences against the person.	4	3	6	4	6	5
(vii) Dacoity, sections 395, 397 and 398	...	...	...	...	...	...
(viii) Serious mischief, including mischief by killing, poisoning or maiming any animal, sections 270, 281, 282, 428, 429, 430—433 and 435—40.	25	11	17	3	5	5
(ix) House-breaking and serious house trespass, sections 449—452, 454, 455 and 457—460.	47	9	44	8	46	12
(x) Wrongful restraint and confinement, sections 341—344.	3	...	1	...	5	5

XI.

Civil Justice by Subdivisions.

1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.	
True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.

TABLE

Statistics of Criminal and

Heads of crime.	1902. True.	1902. Detected.	1903. True.	1903. Detected.	1904. True.	1904. Detected.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION—(*concld.*)						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(xi) Other serious offences against the person and property or against property.	..	...	...	...	1	1
(xii) Theft, sections 379—382 ...	113	32	85	44	87	36
(xiii) Receiving stolen property, sections 411 and 414.	25	25	8	8	9	6
(xiv) Lurking and criminal house trespass, sections 453, 456, 447 and 448.	11	2	15	6	10	5
(xv) Other minor offences against property.	4	3	5	3	4	4
Total ...	276	116	226	108	220	116
JORHAT SUBDIVISION.						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(i) Rioting or unlawful assembly, sections 143—153, 157, 158 and 159.	10	5	5	3	2	2
(ii) Other offences against the State, public tranquillity, &c.	3	3	8	5	8	6
(iii) Murder, attempt at murder, and culpable homicide, sections 302—304, 307, 308, and 396.	2	...	2	2	3	3
(iv) Grievous hurt and hurt by dangerous weapon, sections 324—326, 329, 331, 333, and 335.	11	5	13	10	19	12

XI.

Civil Justice by Subdivisions—(continued).

1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911		1912.	
True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.

TABLE

Statistics of Criminal and

Heads of crime.	1902. True.	1902. Detected.	1903. True.	1903. Detected.	1904. True.	1904. Detected.
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—(*concld.*)						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(v) Serious criminal force, sections 353, 354, 356 and 357.	2	1	4	2	...	...
(vi) Other serious offences against the person.	4	3	4	2	8	5
(vii) Dacoity, sections 395, 397, and 398	...	...	...	...	...	...
(viii) Serious mischief, including mischief by killing, poisoning or maiming any animal, sections 270, 281, 282, 428, 429, 430—33, and 435—40.	10	2	9	2	6	2
(ix) House-breaking and serious house trespass, sections 449--452, 454, 455, and 457—460.	71	18	77	17	80	22
(x) Wrongful restraint and confinement, sections 341—344.	3	...	3	2	5	...
(xi) Other serious offences against the person and property or against property.	...	...	...	...	...	...
(xii) Theft, sections 379,—382 ...	91	29	95	47	87	37
(xiii) Receiving stolen property, sections 411 and 414.	28	24	21	16	19	18
(xiv) Lurking and criminal house trespass, sections 453, 456, 447 and 448	12	6	7	6	9	1
(xv) Other minor offences against property.	2	...	2	...	2	2
Total ...	249	96	250	114	248	110

al Ju

of cases.

for

XI.

Civil Justice by Subdivisions—(continued).

1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.	
True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.

TABLE

Statistics of Criminal

Heads of crime.	1902. True.	1902. Detected.	1903. True.	1903. Detected.	1904. True.	1904. Detected.
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION.						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(i) Rioting or unlawful assembly, sections 143—153, 157, 158 and 159.	4	2	3	2	6	6
(ii) Other offences against the State, public tranquillity, &c.	3	3	4	2	6	6
(iii) Murder, attempt at murder and culpable homicide, sections 302—304, 307, 308 and 396.	4	...	1	1	2	2
(iv) Grievous hurt and hurt by dangerous weapon, sections 324, 326, 329, 331, 333 and 335.	9	9	15	7	8	5
(v) Serious criminal force, sections 353, 354, 356 and 357.	2	...	2	2	2	2
(vi) Other serious offences against the person.	3	1	1	1	5	1
(vii) Dacoity, sections 395, 397 and 398	...	...	...	...	...	...
(viii) Serious mischief, including mischief by killing, poisoning or maiming any animal, sections 270, 281, 282, 428, 429, 430—33 and 435—40.	12	...	15	6	20	1
(ix) House-breaking and serious house trespass, sections 449—452, 454, 455 and 457—460.	35	7	45	6	54	9
(x) Wrongful restraint and confinement, sections 341—344.	4	1	4	2	3	2

XI.

and Civil Justice by Subdivisions—(continued).

1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.	
True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.

TABLE

Statistics of Criminal

Heads of Crime.	1902.		1903.		1904.	
	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—(*concld.*)						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(xi) Other serious offences against the person and property or against property.	1	...	...	...	...	...
(xii) Theft, sections 379–382 ...	98	22	75	35	94	26
(xiii) Receiving stolen property, sections 411 and 414.	18	14	22	21	30	28
(xiv) Lurking and criminal house trespass, sections 453, 456, 447 and 448.	13	5	10	5	4	3
(xv) Other minor offences against property.	...	...	5	3	10	5
Total ...	206	64	202	93	244	96
DISTRICT TOTAL.						
Criminal Justice.						
Number of cases.						
(i) Rioting or unlawful assembly, sections 143–153, 157, 158 and 159.	30	20	19	14	20	20
(ii) Other offences against the State, public tranquillity, &c.	11	9	17	11	18	16
(iii) Murder, attempt at murder and culpable homicide, sections 302–304, 307, 308 and 396.	10	3	9	8	12	10
(iv) Grievous hurt and hurt by dangerous weapon, sections 324–326, 329, 331, 333 and 335.	35	23	46	28	48	30

XI.

and Civil Justice by Subdivisions—(continued).

1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.	
True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.

TABLE

Statistics of Criminal

Heads of crime.	1902. True.	1902. Detected.	1903. True.	1903. Detected.	1904. True.	1904. Detected.
DISTRICT TOTAL—(*concld.*)						
Criminal Justice. Number of cases.						
(v) Serious criminal force, sections 353, 354, 356 and 357.	8	4	11	7	5	5
(vi) Other serious offences against the person.	11	7	11	7	19	11
(vii) Dacoity, sections 395, 397 and 398	...	...	...	...	...	...
(viii) Serious mischief, including mischief by killing, poisoning or maiming any animal, sections 270, 281, 282, 428, 429, 430—433, and 435—440.	47	13	41	11	31	8
(ix) House breaking and serious house trespass, sections 449—452, 454, 455 and 457—460.	153	34	166	31	180	43
(x) Wrongful restraint and confinement, sections 341—344.	10	1	8	4	13	7
(xi) Other serious offences against the person and property or against property.	1	...	...	...	1	1
(xii) Theft, sections 379—382 ...	302	83	255	126	268	99
(xiii) Receiving stolen property, sections 411 and 414.	71	63	51	45	58	52
(xiv) Lurking and criminal house trespass, sections 453, 456, 447 and 448.	36	13	32	17	23	9
(xv) Other minor offences against property.	6	3	12	6	16	11
Total ...	731	276	678	315	712	322
Civil Justice.						
Suits for money and movables ...	2,026		1,982			
Title and other suits	156		183			
Rent suits	82		79			
Total ...	2,264		2,244			

XI.

and Civil Justice by Subdivisions—(concluded).

1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.	
True	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.	True.	Detected.

TABLE

Fluctuations in

Proportion of fluctuating area to settled area

	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION—				
Settled area	261,612	265,361	267,041	276,082
Area excluded from settlement	4,590	3,994	5,830	2,310
Area included in settlement ..	7,282	7,307	7,443	11,222
Revenue demand Rs. ...	4,85,900	4,95,055	5,04,592	5,28,589
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Settled area	292,828	296,116	299,380	305,079
Area excluded from settlement	8,599	7,904	7,045	6,815
Area included in settlement ...	10,936	5,629	10,093	12,132
Revenue demand Rs. ...	5,09,669	5,16,915	5,23,514	5,36,380
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Settled area	188,088	192,086	196,539	196,228
Area excluded from settlement	5,603	6,833	2,893	9,412
Area included in settlement ...	8,013	9,562	7,641	9,038
Revenue demand Rs. ...	3,76,724	3,82,774	3,91,021	3,91,364
TOTAL DISTRICT—				
Settled area	742,528	753,563	762,960	777,389
Area excluded from settlement	18,792	18,731	15,768	18,537
Area included in settlement	26,231	22,498	25,177	32,392
Revenue demand Rs. ...	13,72,293	13,94,744	14,19,127	14,56,333

XII.

settled area.

in 1903-04 { Sibsagar ... 0·1 per cent.
Jorhat ...15·4 „
Golaghat ... 8·5 „

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.

TABLE

Finance—

Principal heads of revenue.	1890-91.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Land revenue (ordinary)	8,11,301	13,95,976	13,73,341	14,02,333	14,22,095
" " (miscellaneous.)	32,683	45,199	45,796	43,289	48,687
Provincial rates ...	59,620	1,02,570	1,01,129	1,04,571	98,123
Judicial stamps ...	35,941	58,900	58,848	56,119	58,933
Non-judicial stamps...	10,561	17,894	16,300	18,798	18,413
Opium	4,86,806	4,71,344	4,58,364	4,73,098	4,89,356
Country spirits ...	69,088	1,42,814	1,49,147	1,48,638	1,38,295
Ganja	22,206	62,633	63,259	65,216	68,967
Other heads of excise	4,326	4,033	4,578	4,472	4,175
Assessed taxes ...	25,797	42,469	43,118	44,446	35,132
No. of assessees per $^{\circ}/_{\circ\circ}$	2	2	2	2	1
Forests	13,501	31,656	33,490	35,235	22,988
Registration ...	1,294	1,950	1,862	1,839	1,895
Total ...	15,73,124	23,77,438	23,49,232	23,98,054	24,07,059

XIII.

Receipts.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.

TABLE

Miscellaneous

Particulars.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION—	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Elephants	...	...	...	880
Fisheries	16,309	14,727	14,836	12,063
Total revenue ...	19,663	17,648	16,153	13,378
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Fisheries	18,025	19,412	19,107	16,954
Total revenue ...	18,503	19,590	19,327	17,171
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Elephants	...	...	...	10,176
Fisheries	1,824	1,502	1,179	1,400
House tax	5,057	6,119	6,484	5,983
Total revenue ...	7,033	8,558	7,809	18,138
TOTAL DISTRICT—				
Elephants	...	...	...	11,056
Fisheries	36,158	35,641	35,122	30,417
House tax	5,057	6,119	6,484	5,983
Other heads	3,984	4,036	1,683	1,231
Total revenue ...	45,199	45,796	43,289	48,687

XIV.

Land Revenue.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.

TABLE
Land

Particulars.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION—				
Total land settled for cultivation of ordinary crops.	154,794	158,351	162,242	171,801
Held on ordinary tenure ...	153,372	156,929	160,820	170,392
Held revenue free (Lakhiraj)...	711	711	711	711
Held at half rates (nisfi-khiraj).	711	711	711	698
Total land settled for cultivation of special staples.	105,439	105,632	103,413	102,861
Area of fee-simple and commuted grants.	40,482	40,482	40,482	40,482
Area settled under other special rules.	5,073	5,073	5,073	5,073
Area settled on 30 years' lease...	43,994	44,307	42,095	41,420
Area settled under ordinary rules or re-settled on expiry of 30 years' lease.	15,890	15,770	15,763	15,886
Total land settled under other tenures.	1,379	1,378	1,386	1,420
Total settled area of subdivision ...	261,612	265,361	267,041	276,082
Total unsettled area of subdivision	482,068	478,319	476,639	467,598
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Total land settled for cultivation of ordinary crops.	198,914	202,055	205,114	210,221
Held on ordinary tenure ...	161,054	164,195	166,923	172,030
Held revenue free (Lakhiraj)...	36,088	36,088	36,419	36,419
Held at half rates (nisfi-khiraj).	1,772	1,772	1,772	1,772
Total land settled for cultivation of special staples.	93,607	93,754	93,959	94,551
Area of fee-simple and commuted grants.	59,215	59,152	59,146	59,146
Area settled under other special rules.	344	344	344	344
Area settled on 30 years' lease	9,425	9,696	9,848	9,848
Area settled under ordinary rules or re-settled on expiry of 30 years' lease.	24,623	24,562	24,621	25,213
Total land settled under other tenures.	307	307	307	307
Total settled area of subdivision ...	292,828	296,116	299,380	305,079
Total unsettled area of subdivision.	231,332	228,044	224,780	219,081

XV.

Tenures.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.

TABLE
Land

Particulars.	1900-01.	1901-02	1902-03.	1903-04.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Total land settled for cultivation of ordinary crops.	120,281	122,597	126,777	126,370
Held on ordinary tenure ...	115,808	118,124	122,304	121,897
Held revenue free (lakhiraj) ...	1,965	1,965	1,965	1,965
Held at half rates (nisfi-khiraj)	2,508	2,508	2,508	2,508
Total land settled for cultivation of special staples.	67,452	69,134	69,411	69,508
Area of fee-simple and commuted grants.	24,942	24,942	24,942	24,942
Area settled under other special rules.	503	503	503	503
Area settled on 30 years' lease	22,216	23,798	24,201	24,201
Area settled under ordinary rules or re-settled on expiry of 30 years' lease.	19,791	19,891	19,765	19,862
Total land settled under other tenures.	355	355	351	350
Total settled area of subdivision ...	188,088	192,086	1,96,539	196,228
Total unsettled area of subdivision	1,741,403	1,737,405	1,732,952	1,733,263
TOTAL DISTRICT—				
Total land settled for cultivation of ordinary crops.	473,989	483,003	494,133	5,08,392
Held on ordinary tenure ...	430,234	439,248	450,047	464,319
Held revenue free (lakhiraj)	38,764	38,764	39,095	39,095
Held at half rates (nisfi-khiraj)	4,991	4,991	4,991	4,978
Total land settled for cultivation of special staples.	266,498	268,520	266,783	266,920
Area of fee-simple and commuted grants.	124,639	124,576	124,570	124,570
Area settled under other special rules.	5,920	5,920	5,920	5,920
Area settled on 30 years' lease...	75,635	77,801	76,144	75,469
Area settled under ordinary rules or re-settled on expiry of 30 years' lease.	60,304	60,223	60,149	60,961
Total land settled under other tenures.	2,041	2,040	2,044	2,077
Total settled area of the district ...	742,528	753,563	762,960	777,389
Total unsettled area of the district	2,454,803	2,443,768	2,434,371	2,420,331

XV.

Tenures—(concld.)

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.

TABLE XVA.

Unsettled area in each tahsil and mauza in 1903-04.

	Total area.	Un-settled area.	REMARKS.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION—	Sq miles.	Sq.miles.	
Tahsils—Namtidol	116	34	
Sibsagar	160	89	
Mauzas—Abhaipur	220	155	Includes 26 sq. miles of reserved forest.
Athkhel	61	20	
Dhopabar	43	12	
Hachara	14	3	
Joktali	19	3	
Khalaighogora ...	114	77	Includes 18 sq. miles of reserved forest.
Nazira	16	2	
Silakuti	54	22	Includes 3 sq. miles of reserved forest.
Thaura Panidihing ...	154	122	Includes 30 sq. miles of reserved forest.
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—			
Tahsil—Jorhat	141	21	
Mauzas—Baligaon	31	11	
Chaokhat	37	18	
Gakhirkhoa	18	3	
Hezari	37	26	
Holongapar	61	14	Includes 8 sq. miles of reserved forest.
Katahagar Charigaon ...	20	2	
Kharikatia Amguri ...	118	50	
Lahing	59	35	
Nakachari	50	17	Includes 11 sq. miles of reserved forest.
Parbatia	25	13	
Salmara	349	293	
Simaluguri	26	12	
Teok	35	22	
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—			
Tahsils—Athgaon	151	66	Includes 10 sq. miles of reserved forest.
Golaghat	179	88	
Mauzas—Ahataguri	135	123	
Barpathar	Not known.		
Barjan	Do.		
Dergaon	17	6	
Dimapur	Not known.		
Duar Bagari	202	202	There are only 123 acres of settled land.
Duar Disa	Not known.		
Gurjogania	27	7	
Kardaiguri	Not known.		
Michamara	49	30	
Naharani	13	3	
Namdayang	222	191	
Naojan	Not known.		
Rangamati	101	79	
Rengma (Eastern and Western).	Not known.		
Rengmapathar ...	Do.		

TABLE
Ex-

Principal heads.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION—				
Number of opium shops ...	69	75	72	72
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	37,049	36,762	43,203	45,388
	M. s.	M. s.	M. s.	M. s.
Opium issued ...	177 3	174 27	175 22	179 27
Duty on opium sold ... Rs.	2,01,865-8-0	1,99,130	2,00,127	2,04,830
Number of ganja shops ...	12	12	12	12
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	14,065	15,259	14,530	15,244
	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M.	M. s. ch.
Amount of ganja issued ...	35 1 4	30 25 8	35	33 11 8
Duty on ganja sold ... Rs.	11,869	11,031	12,600	13,421
Number of country spirit shops.	12	12	12	12
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	56,880	56,806	56,178	54,830
Number of distilleries ...				
Amount of liquor issued...				
Still-head duty ... Rs.				
Number of retail shops ...				
Amount paid for licenses Rs.				
Other heads of excise revenue. Rs.	1,897	2,219	2,074	2,032
JORHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Number of opium shops ...	59	59	60	60
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	17,345	15,846	17,393	17,274
	M. s.	M. s.	M. s.	M. s.
Opium issued ...	97 17	91 28	93 32	96 28
Duty on opium sold ... Rs.	1,11,064-8-0	1,04,538	1,06,932	1,10,238
Number of ganja shops...	15	16	16	16
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	14,138	13,480	13,388	14,614
	M. s.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
Amount of ganja issued	29 3	28 27 2	28 37 8	24 30 8
Duty on ganja sold ... Rs.	10,141	10,324	10,484	9,987
Number of country spirit shops.	10	10	10	10
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	51,700	57,191	57,150	54,345
Number of distilleries ...				
Amount of liquor issued...				
Still-head duty ... Rs.				
Number of retail shops ...				
Amount paid for licenses Rs.				
Other heads of excise revenue. Rs.	1,136	1,056	1,158	1,090
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION—				
Number of opium shops...	50	55		54
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	14,644	15,790		14,583
	M. s.	M. s.		M. s.
Opium issued ...	78 16	75 28		85 5
Duty on opium sold ... Rs.	89,376	86,298		97,043

XVI.
cise.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.

TABLE

Ex

Principal heads.	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.
Number of ganja shops	7	9	9	9
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	7,148	8,213	7,840	8,872
	M. s. ch.	M. s ch.	M. s.	M. s. ch.
Amount of ganja issued	14 25 8	13 28 8	17 26	17 37 0
Duty on ganja sold ... Rs.	5,272	4,952	6,374	6,829
Number of country spirit shops.	10	11	11	9
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	34,234	35,150	35,310	29,120
Number of distilleries...				
Amount of liquor issued				
Still-head duty ... Rs.				
Number of retail shops...				
Amount paid for licenses Rs.				
Other heads of excise revenue. ... ... Rs.	1,000	1,303	1,240	1,053
TOTAL DISTRICT—				
Number of opium shops	178	189	189	186
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	69,038	68,398	76,378	77,245
	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
Opium issued ...	352 36 0	342 3 0	348 0 0	361 20 0
Duty on opium sold ... Rs.	4,02,306	3,89,966	3,96,720	4,12,111
Number of ganja shops...	34	37	37	37
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	35,351	36,952	35,758	38,730
	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch	M. s. ch.
Amount of ganja issued...	78 29 12	73 1 2	81 23 8	75 39 0
Duty on ganja sold .. Rs.	27,282	26,307	29,458	30,237
Number of country spirit shops.	32	33	33	31
Amount paid for licenses Rs.	1,42,814	1,49,147	1,48,638	1,38,295
Number of distilleries ...				
Amount of liquor issued				
Still-head duty ... Rs.				
Number of retail shops...				
Amount paid for licenses Rs.				
Other heads of excise revenue ... ... Rs.	4,033	4,578	4,472	4,175

XVI.

cise—(concluded).

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.
M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.	M. s. ch.

TABLE XVII.

Income and expenditure of Local Boards.

Sibsagar.

Sources of income.	Income.		Heads of expenditure.	Expenditure.	
	1890-91.	1900-01.		1890-91.	1900-01.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Provincial rates ...	20,154	35,560	Post office ...	464	1,294
Police ...	3,202	3,994	Administration ...	170	170
Tolls on ferries ...	5,527	8,200	Education ...	6,785	9,713
Contributions ...	14,914	14,000	Medical ...	1,050	2,220
Debt ...	...	2,019	Civil works ...	29,796	53,433
Miscellaneous ...	1,009	1,685	Debt ...	...	1,686
			Miscellaneous ...	1,640	564
Total ...	44,806	65,458	Total ...	39,905	69,080

Jorhat.

Sources of income.	Income.		Heads of expenditure.	Expenditure.	
	1890-91.	1900-01.		1890-91.	1900-01.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Provincial rates ...	23,248	40,745	Post office ...	572	941
Police ...	1,871	3,846	Administration ...	105	105
Tolls on ferries ...	4,153	4,530	Education ...	5,298	10,276
Contributions ...	7,248	5,000	Medical ...	576	2,331
Debt ...	...	2,985	Civil works ...	24,515	52,548
Miscellaneous ...	1,209	2,839	Debt ...	...	3,089
			Miscellaneous ...	1 411	808
Total ...	37,729	59,945	Total ...	32,477	70,098

TABLE XVII.

Income and expenditure of Local Boards—(concluded).

Golaghat.

Sources of income.	Income.		Heads of expenditure.	Expenditure.	
	1890-91.	1900-01.		1890-91.	1900-01.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Provincial rates ...	16,186	26,311	Post office ...	402	2,052
Police ...	1,604	3,259	Administration ...	83	83
Tolls on ferries ...	1,849	454	Education ...	3,725	7,512
Contributions ...	8,654	6,660	Medical ...	793	3,749
Debt ...	...	1,959	Civil works ...	18,224	27,963
Miscellaneous ...	129	73	Debt ...	...	1,371
			Miscellaneous ...	1,084	826
Total ...	28,422	38,716	Total ...	24,311	43,556

TABLE XVIII.

Municipal.

Sibsagar Station.

Sources of income.	Income.		Heads of expenditure.	Expenditure.	
	1890-91.	1900-01.		1890-91.	1900-01.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Opening balance ...	194	315	Administration ...	498	669
Tax on houses and lands.	2,051	2,854	Conservancy ...	904	3,386
Pounds ...	1,687	1,346	Public works ...	3,883	4,128
Fees from markets...	648	1,205	Public instruction...	455	606
Grants from Govt. and Local Funds.	3,000	5,000	Drainage ...	247	250
			Other heads ...	2,244	2,783
Other sources ...	1,381	1,273	Closing balance ...	730	171
Total ...	8,961	11,993	Total ...	8,961	11,933

TABLE XVIII.

Municipal—(concluded).

Jorhat Union.

Sources of income.	Income.		Heads of expenditure.	Expenditure.	
	1890-91.	1900-01.		1890-91.	1900-01.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Opening balance ...	953	3,969	Administration ...	480	516
Tax on houses and lands.	922	180	Conservancy ...	586	1,464
Pounds ...	1,699	1.273	Public works ...	1,600	2,290
Fees from markets ...	680	1,434	Public instruction...	120	371
Grants from Govt. and Local Funds.	1,000	2,000	Drainage ...	793	185
Tax on persons ...	...	1,302	Other heads ...	1,041	2.665
Other sources ...	89	318	Closing balance ...	723	2,985
Total ...	5,343	10,476	Total ...	5,343	10,476

Golaghat Union.

Sources of income.	Income.		Heads of expenditure.	Expenditure.	
	1890-91.	1900-01.		1890-91.	1900-01.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Opening balance ...	319	3,383	Administration ...	276	574
Tax on houses and lands.	1,010	240	Conservancy ...	565	1,277
Pounds ...	2,140	1,506	Public works ...	1,939	1,097
Fees from markets ...	1,560	1,466	Public instruction...	272	436
Grants from Govt. and Local Funds.	800	1,500	Drainage ...	167	206
Tax on persons ...	...	967	Other heads ...	1,766	1,432
Other sources ...	195	148	Closing balance ...	1,039	4,188
Total ...	6,024	9,210	Total ...	6,024	9,210

TABLE XIX.

Strength of Police Force.

Particulars.	1881.	1891.	1901.
CIVIL POLICE.			
SUPERVISING STAFF			
District and Assistant Superintendents	1	1	1
Inspectors	3	3	3
SUBORDINATE STAFF.			
Sub-Inspectors	5	4	15
Head Constables	13	29	26
Constables	90	202	269
Union and Municipal Police	7	8	8
Total expenditure ... ... Rs.	37,442	46,907	70,950

Actual strength for 1881 and sanctioned strength for other years.

As the full sanctioned numb-r of Sub-Inspectors was not entertained during the year 1901, only the actual number of Sub-Inspectors and Head Constables is shown for that year.

TABLE XX.

Police Stations and Outposts in 1904.

	Name of Police Station or Outpost.	SANCTIONED STRENGTH.			
		Sub-Inspectors.	Head Constables.	Constables.	Total.
SIBSAGAR SUBDIVISION.	Bartala P. S.	2	...	11	13
	Sibsagar P. S.	3	1	15	19
	Sonari O. P.	1	...	8	9
JORHAT SUBDIVISION.	Jorhat P. S.	4	1	20	25
	Majuli O. P.	1	...	4	5
	Seleng O. P.	1	...	8	9
GOLAGHAT SUBDIVISION.	Bokakhat O. P.	1	...	4	5
	Dergaon O. P.	1	...	5	6
	Dimapur O. P.	1	...	4	5
	Golaghat P. S.	3	1	15	19

TABLE XXI.

Jail Statistics.

Sibsagar Jail.

		1881.	1891.	1901.
Average daily population	Male ...	40	55	59
	Female ...	1	2	1
Rate of jail mortality per 1,000		24	35	...
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Expenditure on jail maintenance		3,819	5,386	5,634
Cost per prisoner* (excluding civil prisoners) ...		40	43	47
Profits on jail manufacture		2,082	1,821	36
Earnings per prisoner†		56	38	1

Jorhat Subsidiary Jail.

		1881.	1891.	1901.
Average daily population	Male ...	16	20	20
	Female ...	1	1	1
Rate of jail mortality per 1,000		60	...	93
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Expenditure on jail maintenance		1,647	1,679	1 252
Cost per prisoner* (excluding civil prisoners) ...		41	37	41
Profits on jail manufacture		847	498	659
Earnings per prisoner†		56	30	39

Golaghat Subsidiary Jail.

		1881	1891	1901.
Average daily population	Male	14	20	21
	Female	1	1	1
Rate of jail mortality per 1,000		68	190	46
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Expenditure on jail maintenance		1,971	1,820	1,275
Cost per prisoner* (excluding civil prisoners) ...		67	44	44
Profits on jail manufacture		...	410	890
Earnings per prisoner †		...	26	47

* On rations and clothing only.

† Calculated on the average number sentenced to labour.

TABLE

Educa

	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03	1903-04.
SECONDARY SCHOOLS.				
High Schools.				
Number	5	5	6	6
Number of boys reading in High Schools.	200	206	213	249
Number of boys reading in Middle School Classes.	276	286	382	414
Number of boys reading in Primary Classes.	622	585	781	760
Middle English Schools.				
Number	7	7	7	7
Number of boys reading in Middle School Classes.	102	103	55	82
Number of boys reading in Primary Classes.	551	552	493	464
Middle Vernacular Schools.				
Number	2	2	2	2
Number of boys reading in Middle School Classes.	28	31	14	19
Number of boys reading in Primary Classes.	148	155	176	154
PRIMARY SCHOOLS.				
Upper Primary Schools				
Number	7	7	6	5
Number of boys reading in Upper Primary Classes.	65	63	54	37
Number of boys reading in Lower Primary Classes.	256	278	237	171
Lower Primary Schools.				
Number	302	311	300	290
Number of boys reading in three Upper Classes.	(a)9,157	(a)9,797	3,525	3,959
Number of boys reading in Lower Classes.			6,370	5,902
FEMALE EDUCATION.				
Number of Girls' Schools ...	19	19	14	7
Number of girls reading (whether in Girls' or Boys' Schools) in High Schools.	...	...	...	...
Middle English Schools ...	1	...	1	...
Middle Vernacular Schools ...	...	1	2	2
Upper Primary Schools ...	14	7	7	...
Lower Primary Schools ...	618	606	409	234

(a) Separate figures

XXII.

tion.

1904-05.	1905-06.	1906-07.	1907-08.	1908-09.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.

not available.

TABLE XXIII.

Educational Finance.

Particulars.	No. of institutions.	Expenditure on institutions maintained or aided by public funds in 1900-01 from					Amount per head of scholar.		
		Provincial revenues.	District and municipal funds.	Fees.	Other sources.	Total.			
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	a.	p.
Training and Special Schools ...	3	1,114	563	140	...	1,817	72	10	10
Secondary Boys' Schools—									
Upper (High)	5	647	...	21,061	3	21,711	20	0	5
Lower (Middle)	9	1,261	1,944	4,287	779	8,271	11	2	5
Primary Boys' Schools—									
Upper	7	...	817	399	275	1,491	5	5	2
Lower	302	...	20,087	1,491	24	21,602	2	8	9
Girls' Schools	19	...	1,400	...	44	1,444	4	7	3
Total ...	345	3,022	24,811	27,378	1,125	56.336	5	2	5

TABLE

Medi

Particulars.	Sibsagar. 1881.	1891.	1901.	Jor 1881.	1891.
Number of dispensaries ...	1	1	2	1	1
Daily average number of in-door patients.	6·23	8·84	55·50	3 89	7·01
Daily average number of out-door patients.	27·91	28·03	73·31	32·15	14·27
Cases treated	3,274	7,741	20,148	5,287	4,381
Operations performed ...	189	212	255	366	74
Total income ... Rs. ...	1,618	4,011	8,585	1,431	2,931
Income from Government Rs. ...	499	1,172	2,174	755	96
Income from Local and Municipal Funds Rs. ...	609	950	2,100	...	920
Subscriptions ... Rs. ...	498	360	363	677	513
Total expenditure ... Rs. ...	1,582	3,908	8,569	1,431	2,920
Expenditure on establishment Rs.	756	1,411	2,592	1,002	396
Ratio per mille of persons successfully vaccinated					Not
Cost per case ... Rs. ...					Do.

XXIV.

cal.

HAT.	GOLAGHAT.			TOTAL DISTRICT.		
1901.	1881.	1891.	1901.	1881.	1891.	1901.
2	...	1	2	2	3	6
7·96	...	4·47	8·94	10·12	20·32	72·40
94·33	...	22·23	38·76	60·06	64·53	206·40
22,785	...	7,098	8,832	8,561	19,220	51,765
206	...	74	193	555	360	654
6,218	...	1,785	5,443	3,049	8,727	20,246
612	...	168	652	1,254	1,436	3,438
2,591	...	540	2,610	609	2,410	7,301
680	...	258	409	1,175	1,131	1,452
6,170	...	1,722	5,442	3,013	8,550	20,181
1,228	...	454	1,313	1,758	2,261	5,133
available.				12·76	40·44	48·82
do.				...	0-1-5	0-1-0

TABLE

Dispen

Name of Dispensary.	1900.		1901.		1902.		1903.		1904.		1905.	
	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.
	Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.	
Sibsagar ...	4,499	11,934	7,289	14,046	4,370	16,313	4,246	16,478	3,911	18,109		
Jhanzi ...	1,326	6,888	1,280	6,102	771	7,068	1,303	7,555	1,452	11,047		
Jorhat ...	4,003	11,598	4,281	17,648	2,738	17,656	3,269	19,476	3,255	25,142		
Titabar ...	1,571	5,203	1,889	5,137	1,274	5,825	1,173	6,595	1,871	7,528		
Golaghat...	2,547	6,918	3,800	7,174	2,128	9,246	1,679	11,091	2,185	13,157		
Dimapur ...	1,508	1,702	1,643	1,658	1,060	1,760	1,378	2,237	1,263	2,966		
Dergaon ...	...	...	...	...	371	9,858	975	11,131	1,503	11,434		

XXV.

saries.

1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.	
Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.	Total cost.	Cases treated.
Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.	

INDEX.

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